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INFALLIBILITY OF THE CHURCH

A Course of Lectures

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DIVINITY SCHOOL OF THE UNIVERSITY OF DUBLIN

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A Course of Lectures

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BY

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A Historical Introduction to the Study of the Books of the New Testament



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PREFACE.

THIS volume, like that already published under the title of 'An Introduction to the New Testament,' contains lectures delivered in the ordinary course of instruction to my class in the Divinity School of the Dublin University. The character of the audience addressed in such lectures renders necessary a mode of treatment different from that which would be suitable in a work originally intended for publication. A lecturer does not aim at that completeness which is demanded by the purchaser of a book, who expects to find in it all the information he needs on the subject with which it deals, and who objects to be sent to look for it elsewhere. The teacher of a class of intelligent young men cannot but feel that the knowledge which he can hope to communicate to them directly is insignificant in comparison with what they will acquire by their own reading, if he can only interest them in the study. He has no wish to save them the trouble of reading books, and thinks it would be waste of time to spend much in telling them what they are likely to read for themselves elsewhere. It is not his duty to write a new book for their use if he can refer them to sources

whence the same information can be satisfactorily obtained. And he naturally adopts a colloquial style as best adapted for retaining the attention of the hearers of a long *viva voce* lecture.

On account of the differences I have indicated, I had not thought my lectures suitable for publication in their actual form, though I at times entertained intentions of writing theological works for which these lectures might supply materials. But time went on without my finding or making leisure to carry any of my contemplated projects into execution; until, three or four years ago, I was led to consider the possibility that if I were to die leaving lectures behind me, the pious zeal of some of my friends might cause them to be published posthumously. I felt that if any of my lectures were to be printed, I should much prefer that it were done before they were quite out of date, and while they could have the benefit of my own revision. So I determined to try the experiment of printing some of them; and I selected those on the New Testament, as being on the subject most likely to be generally interesting. Having found by experience that there was no likelihood of my casting my lectures into any different form, I sent them to be printed just as they were, though in the course of their passing through the press I found so many points omitted, or imperfectly treated, that I was led to make additions which considerably increased the bulk of the volume.

The favourable reception which that volume has met with has encouraged me to print another series of lectures. For the reasons stated in the Introductory

Lecture, I do not expect the subject to be so generally interesting as that of the former volume; and yet I have in the same lecture given reasons for considering the investigation to be one that ought not to be neglected. But I frankly confess that I have had more pleasure in that part of my professorial work which engaged me in the defence of truths held in common by all who love our Blessed Lord, than when it was my duty to discuss points on which Christians differ among themselves. It has, however, been a pleasant thought to me, that in the present series of lectures I was doing what in me lay to remove what is now the greatest obstacle to the union of Christians. There is, I think, abundant evidence that at the present day the pressure of the conflict with unbelief is drawing Christians closer together. When we regard the state of mutual feeling between members of the Anglican Church on the one hand, and on the other the Greek Church, or the German Old Catholics, or the Scotch Presbyterians, or the Scandinavian Churches, I think we can discern in all cases a growing sense that there are things in which we all agree, more important than the things on which we differ. And the prospect is not altogether unhopeful that, by further discussions and mutual explanations, such an approximation of opinion might be arrived at that there would be at least no bar to intercommunion. But as the Roman Church is at present disposed, there can be no union with her except on the terms of absolute submission; that submission, moreover, involving an acknowledgment that we from our hearts believe things

to be true, which we have good reasons for knowing to be false. The nature of the claims of Rome clearly shuts out that possibility of reconciliation in her case, which may be hoped for in other cases from retractations or mutual explanations; so that, by every effort to bring about the withdrawal of these claims, we are doing something to remove the main obstacle to the reunion of Christendom.

I am not so silly as to imagine that any perceptible effect can follow from adding one to the many demonstrations that have been given that the claims of which I speak are unfounded. But no false opinion can resist for ever the continual dropping of repeated disproofs. We may point out instance after instance in which papal authority has been given to decisions now known to be erroneous, and in each case some ingenious attempt may be made to show that the attribute of infallibility did not attach to the erroneous decision; but sooner or later men must awake to see that the result of all this special pleading is that, whereas they expected to find a guide who would always lead them right, they have got instead a guide who can find some plausible excuse to make every time he leads them wrong. I do not think it absolutely impossible that, under the pressure of historical disproof, some such modification of the theory of Roman Infallibility may eventually be made as will amount to a practical withdrawal of it. The theory of Development, which has now found extensive acceptance in the Roman Communion, involves the belief that the Church of the present day is, in some respects, wiser than the Church

of earlier times. When that theory has been itself a little further developed, it may be found to give the Church the right to review the decisions of earlier times, and to abandon claims formerly made, but which experience has shown to be untenable.

In the present series of lectures I have not entered into the details of the controversy with Roman Catholics. I was able to refer my class to many good books which have been written on the subject. But arguments are useless if addressed to those who profess to be above argument. As the controversy is conducted at the present day, everything turns on the power claimed for the Pope of determining and declaring, without any attempt to produce evidence, what are or are not Apostolic traditions. There really is but one question to be settled: Are we bound to receive undoubtingly the Pope's unproved assertions, without any attempt to test by argument whether they are true or not? He may declare in words that he has no commission to make revelation of new doctrine, but only to hand down faithfully the revelation made through the Apostles; but what does that avail if we are bound to take his word whether a doctrine be new or not? He may propound a doctrine such as that of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin, which it is certain that the Church for centuries never regarded as part of the revelation made through the Apostles, and it is held that we are bound not only to believe that doctrine to be true, but also to believe, on the Pope's authority, that it is old.

These lectures were not written for Roman Catholics; and I do not expect them to fall into the hands of any, except of those who deal in controversy, and who, perhaps, may take up the volume in order to see if it contains anything that needs to be answered. If any such there should be, I beg of them to remember that they are overhearing what members of another communion say when they are quite by themselves, and, therefore, that they must not be offended if they meet the proverbial fate of listeners in hearing some things not complimentary. If they should think that I have not done justice to their side of the question in the view I have presented of it, I earnestly request them to believe that my error has been involuntary; that it has been my desire to know, and to report fairly, the strongest arguments that can be used in defence of the Roman claims; and that if there be stronger than those which I have attempted to answer, my omission arises either from ignorance of them, or because the constitution of my intellect is such that I could see no force in them.

With regard to the manner in which I have expressed myself, it is possible they may object to my habitual use of the term Romanists to denote the members of their Church. In the older Church of England books of controversy the word commonly used was 'Papists,' and the religion was called 'Popery.' In modern times the word Papist is supposed to be offensive, though I do not know why men should be ashamed of being called after the Pope, who give him now even a more prominent place in their religious system than he held three hundred years ago. I have,

however, avoided using a term which, whether rightly or wrongly, is imagined to be offensive, though I suspect that the real reason for objecting to it is a desire to be known by no other name than 'Catholics.' Protestants who know nothing of theology are apt freely to concede the appellation, having no other idea connected with it than that it is the name of a sect; but those who know better feel that it is a degradation of a noble word to limit it in such a way. And, in truth, if it is possible to convey insult by a title, what is really insulting is that one section of Christians should appropriate to themselves the title 'Catholic' as their exclusive right, and thus, by implication, deny it to others. This is so obvious that they do not now insist on being called Catholics pure and simple, and are satisfied if other people will speak of them as Roman Catholics. It is a compromise which I am willing to accept in my intercourse with persons of that religion; but I observe that when they are by themselves they always drop the 'Roman,' and call themselves 'Catholics.' So they have no cause to be offended if, when we are by ourselves, we drop the 'Catholic' and call them 'Roman.'

We may fairly object to an inconvenient periphrasis. If we must not speak of members of the Roman Church without tacking Catholic to their name, must we not also, if we claim an equal right in the title, add it to our own name? While, however, we could describe our brethren in England as Anglo-Catholic, how are those of us who live in Ireland or Scotland or America to call ourselves? If any sect—say the Unitarian—were to claim the exclusive title of Christians, and when this were refused them,

should insist, at least, in being known, not as Unitarians, but as Unitarian Christians, would not that be felt to be the old claim in disguise, since it would be inconvenient to us to be obliged to make a similar addition to our own name? What I should understand by a Roman Catholic would be a member of the Catholic Church whose home was Rome. A member of the Catholic Church who lived in England would, of necessity, be an Anglo-Catholic. If he wanted there to be a Roman Catholic, he would be no Catholic at all, but a schismatic. To speak honestly, of all the sects into which Christendom is divided, none appears to me less entitled to the name Catholic than the Roman. Firmilian, long ago, thus addressed a former bishop of Rome (and this great bishop Firmilian must be regarded as expressing the sentiments not only of the Eastern Church of the third century, but also of St. Cyprian, to whose translation, no doubt, we owe our knowledge of his letter): 'How great is the sin of which you have incurred the guilt in cutting yourself off from so many Christian flocks. For, do not deceive yourself, it is yourself you have cut off: since he is the real schismatic who makes himself an apostate from the communion of ecclesiastical unity. While you think that you can cut off all from your communion, it is yourself whom you cut off from communion with all.' At the present day the bishop of Rome has broken communion with more than half of Christendom, merely because it will not yield him an obedience to which he has no just right. To me he appears to have as little claim to the title Catholic as had the Donatists of old, who,

no matter how many bishops they had in their adherence, were rightly deemed schismatics, because they had unjustly broken communion with the rest of the Christian world.

I might, however, have conquered my objection to the name Roman Catholic, if it were not that it seems to draw with it the word Roman-catholicism, one of some abominable words that have been introduced in our generation. To me, 'Catholic' and '-ism' represent ideas which absolutely refuse to coalesce. Roman Catholics hold many doctrines which I believe to be true and Catholic; but what is meant by Roman-catholicism is that part of the belief of Roman Catholics which is not Catholic, and is not true.

The majority of the lectures in this volume were written about the year 1870; and as they were not intended for publication, they contained no references to authorities. This has caused me some inconvenience, as, since the time these lectures were written, my reading has taken other directions. I have, however, been able to supply references to the ancient authorities cited; but I have not thought it worth while to give the labour necessary to note what use I have made of the literature current at the time the lectures were written.

I have to acknowledge the assistance given me by my friends, Dr. Gwynn and Dr. Quarry, who have been kind enough to read the proofs of this volume; and I have to thank the Rev. W. K. Ormsby for help given me in the preparation of the Index.

ERRATA.

Page 183, line 2, *for* 1854 *read* 1852.
,, 200, ,, 8, ,, a *read* à.
,, 222, ,, 38, ,, in *read* on.
,, 256, ,, 13, ,, Protestant *read* Protestantism.

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I.

INTRODUCTORY.

THE CONTROVERSY WITH ROME.

WHEN I attended the Lectures of the Regius Professor of Divinity, now more than forty years ago, the prescribed division of his year's work was, that in one Term he gave a course of lectures on the Bible; in another, on the Articles; in the third, on the Liturgy. When I succeeded to the Chair myself, I found that, for several years previously, the subject of this Term's lectures, as set down in the University *Calendar*, had been, not the Articles, but the Roman Catholic Controversy. It is easy to understand how the change took place. It was, of course, impossible in the Lectures of one Term to treat of all the Articles; and, some selection being necessary, it was natural that the Professor, on whom the duty is imposed by statute of giving instruction on the controversies which our Church has to carry on with her adversaries, whether within or without the pale of Christianity, should select for consideration the Articles bearing on the controversy which in this country is most pressing, and in which the members of our Church took the deepest interest—the controversy with Rome. This limitation of my subject being only suggested by precedent, not imposed on me by authority, I was free to disregard it. As I have not done so, I think I ought to begin by telling you my reasons for agreeing with my predecessors in regarding the study of this controversy as profitable employment for the Lectures of this Term.

I readily own, indeed, that I have found, both inside and outside the University, that this controversy does not excite

the same interest now that it did even a dozen years ago. In your voluntary Society, in which the members read theological essays on subjects of their own selection, I notice that topics bearing on this controversy are now but rarely chosen; whereas I can remember when they predominated, almost to the exclusion of other subjects. There are many reasons for this decline of interest.

One effect of Disestablishment, in not merely reviving the synodical action of the Church, but widely extending it, introducing the laity into Church councils, and entrusting to them a share in the determination of most important questions, has been to concentrate the interest of our people on the subjects discussed in such assemblies; and in this way our little disputes with each other have left us no time to think of the far wider differences that separate us from Rome on the one hand, and from various dissenting sects on the other. But besides this cause, special to ourselves, of decline of interest in the Roman Catholic controversy, there are others which have operated in England as well as here.

First, I may mention a reaction against certain extreme anti-Romanist over-statements. It was only to be expected that, at the time of the Reformation, men who had with a violent effort wrenched themselves away from beliefs in which they had been brought up, and who, for the exercise of this freedom of thought, were being persecuted to the death, should think far more of their points of difference from their persecutors than of the points on which they agreed with them. A considerable section of the men who had witnessed the bloody scenes of Queen Mary's reign scarcely thought of their adversaries as worshippers of the same God as themselves. The form in which one of the opponents of Queen Elizabeth's marriage with a French prince put the question as to the lawfulness of marriage with a Roman Catholic was, whether it was lawful for a child of God to wed with a son of the devil. When Fox, the Martyrologist, has to speak of the religious services, not merely of the Roman Catholics of his own day, but of the Church in the days before any reformation had been attempted, he seems to regard them as fit

subjects for ridicule and insult. It would be easy to quote specimens that would grate on the feelings of those of us who have least sympathy with Rome. When Fox has to tell of what he could well remember—the prayers which the Romanists offered up on the occasion of the supposed pregnancy of Queen Mary—he mocks them with the taunt of Elijah, 'Cry up louder, you priests, peradventure your god is asleep.' He does not seem to have reflected that the prayers in question were addressed, not to Baal, but to the same God whom he worshipped himself.

But modern conceptions of the proper attitude of mind of a historian require him to strive to enter impartially into the feelings of all his characters. We can now find apologies even for the magistrates who shed the blood of the first Christians, and whom their victims regarded in no other light than as the instruments of Satan. We can now recognize that many of them were grave magistrates, simply anxious to do their duty in carrying out the law; some of them humane men, who were sincerely grieved by what they regarded as the unreasonable obstinacy of those who left them no option but to proceed to the last extremities. One of the most harrowing and most authentic tales now extant of Christian heroism and heathen cruelty relates things done with the express sanction of Marcus Aurelius, the man who, of all the heathen of whom we have knowledge, approached nearest to Christian excellence; nay, who surpassed many professors of a better creed in purity of life, in meekness, gentleness, unselfish anxiety at any cost to do his duty. No wonder, then, that we can find apologies, too, for Roman Catholic persecutors, and believe that many a judge who sent a heretic to the stake may have been a conscientious, good man, fulfilling what he regarded as an unpleasant duty, and no more a monster of inhumanity than one of the hanging judges of George the Third's reign, who at one assizes sent scores of criminals to the gallows. If we can judge less harshly of Roman Catholic persecutors, it is still easier to judge mildly of ordinary Roman Catholics. With some of them we may perhaps be personally acquainted,

and may know them to be not only just and honourable in the ordinary affairs of life, but, according to their lights, sincerely pious, living in the devout belief of the cardinal truths of our faith.

The feeling that there are many things in which we agree with Roman Catholics has been helped by the increased circulation among members of the Anglican Church of pre-Reformation, or distinctly Roman Catholic, books of devotion. In England especially, where Roman Catholics are few, and where the controversy with dissent has been the most urgent, members of the Established Church, besides the natural disposition to indulgence towards the less formidable enemy, sympathize the more with those who share with them not only their common Christianity, but also attachment to Episcopacy and to an ancient liturgy. And I must not omit to mention that, with regard to Eucharistic doctrine, a great change has taken place during the last quarter of a century in the feelings of the English clergy. Views are held by men who pass as moderate which, when I was young, a man would be accounted violently extreme for maintaining; while the opinions put forward by men who now rank as extreme would, in days that I can remember, have been considered absolutely outside the limits imposed by our Church's teaching. Hence has naturally sprung an inclination to sympathize with those with whom unity exists on this important subject, to the disregard of differences perhaps in real truth more vital.

In addition to the causes I have mentioned, the struggle with unbelief has benefited the cause of Romanism. In the first place, some of the minds less docile to authority, less inclined to mysticism, who, had they remained among us, would have been ranged strongly on the anti-Romanist side, have been lost to Christianity altogether; and this fact has increased the proportion of sympathizers with Romanism among those who still remain. Again, there are many whose temptations are altogether on the side of scepticism, and who, feeling themselves in danger of being worsted in the cruel conflict with doubt, have recoiled towards Rome, under the idea that there they would be safer. Distressed at

results to which free inquiry seemed to lead them, they have determined to attempt no more to think for themselves, but submit themselves resignedly to the yoke of authority; and where can authority be found which gives more promise of relieving men of the responsibility of self-direction than that of a Church which claims to be infallible? In point of fact, a majority of the perverts which Rome has made in later years have been made through the road of scepticism; and I have known Romish advocates unscrupulously use sceptical arguments, in order that their victims, despairing of finding elsewhere a solution of their doubts, might be so glad to welcome a Church which offered them certainty, as to be disinclined to make too minute an examination of her power to fulfil her promises.

Once more, the growth of scepticism has produced in another way disinclination to the Roman controversy. There are many nominal members of our Church who adhere to the profession of a creed which was that of their fathers, but who have little concern for religious truth; who are apt to think that a man's religion is his own affair, with which other people have no business to concern themselves; and that whether his belief be true or false does not really much matter. Such persons are apt to regard any attempt to show that Roman teaching is false as a wanton attack on poor, harmless Roman Catholics, and as little different from personal abuse of unoffending people. I fear it will be a long time before men are so philosophic as to understand that a man is not your enemy because he tries to correct errors in your opinions, and that the more important the subject the greater the service he will render you if he makes you change your false opinion for a true one.

I have enumerated causes enough (and more might be added, if I were to speak of the influence of political changes) to explain the undoubted fact, that less interest is generally felt in the Roman Catholic controversy now than was felt twenty or thirty years ago. Yet I have no hesitation in presenting it to you as a subject, in acquiring a knowledge of which your time will be well spent. What use you are

hereafter to make of your knowledge will depend upon circumstances in which you must be guided by considerations of expediency.

In different times, and in different circumstances, different dangers are formidable, and a man exercises a wise discretion in devoting his chief energies to combating the dangers which are most threatening at the time. Both in politics and in religion parties are apt to make the mistake of carrying on traditional warfare with enemies whose power has now decayed, and neglecting the silent growth of foes now far more formidable: in politics, for instance, delighting to weaken the executive government on account of instances of royal tyranny two hundred years ago, and taking no account of the opposite danger of anarchy: in religion, fearing only lest men should believe too much, and not noticing that in many places now the danger is lest they should not believe at all. I had occasion last Term to remark, that at different periods of St. Paul's life different controversies engaged him; and I pointed out that to overlook this was the fundamental error of Baur, who denied the genuineness of all Paul's letters which did not give prominence to that controversy which is the main subject of the four letters that Baur admitted. Thus, I can quite acknowledge that different circumstances may make it wise to insist on different topics, and that it is not judicious to make the Roman controversy the main object at all times and in all places. But a man must be blind, indeed, if he imagines that there is no danger from Romanism. Even in England it is often formidable. In Ireland there is no place where it is not pressing.

I am not in the least ashamed of the object aimed at in the Roman Catholic controversy. I believe that the Church of Rome teaches false doctrine on many points which must be called important, if anything in religion can be called important; and it is not merely that on some particular points the teaching of that Church is erroneous, but they who submit to her are obliged to surrender their understanding to her, and submit to be led blindfold they know not whither. I count it, then, a very good work to release a

man from Roman bondage—a release of which I think he will be the better, both as regards the things of eternity and those of time. The only question, then, that I should be disposed to entertain as to the expediency of direct controversy with Roman Catholics is, whether or not such controversy may be expected to eventuate in their conversion. It is notorious that many controversial efforts have been made with no other result than that of embittering those to whom they were addressed. We are not commanded to cast our pearls before animals who are likely to turn again and rend us; and if the state of men's feelings is such as to indispose them for a candid consideration of the truths set before them, then prudence may forbid the attempt. Of course, what I am saying would apply to the use of prudence in preaching Christianity just as much as in preaching Protestantism. In either case we are blameworthy if we preach the truth to others in such a way as to make them less likely to accept it. But, fully granting all this, I hold that it is unworthy of any man who possesses knowledge to keep his knowledge to himself, and rejoice in his own enlightenment, without making any effort to bring others to share in his privileges. Justly did the four lepers at the gate of Samaria feel their conscience smite them: 'We do not well; this is a day of good tidings, and we hold our peace.' Had those to whom the light of Christianity was first given dealt so with our ancestors, we should still be lying in heathen darkness.

But, even if it should not be your duty hereafter to make any aggressive efforts for the dissemination of the truth, you may still be forced to take up the Roman Catholic controversy for the safety of the people committed to your own care. The most ardent admirer of peace societies may be forced to own that muskets and cannon have some use if an invasion be made on our own shores. And certainly our Roman Catholic countrymen have not that aversion to proselytism (at least when it is made in what they account the right direction) that some among ourselves recommend as a virtue. The poorer members of our Church especially are under constant pressure from the eagerness of their neigh-

bours to win them over to the faith of 'the true Church'—pressure which it would often much advance their worldly interests to give way to. Why should they not give way, if you, who are their spiritual guides, can give them no reason for refusing to submit to the Roman claims?

And setting aside the consideration of our duty to others, our duty to ourselves requires us not to shrink from a full and candid examination of the validity of the Roman claims. Can we believe in our Lord's Divinity—believe that He founded a Church, and not care to inquire whether or not it is true that He appointed a vicegerent upon earth to govern that Church, from whom His people are bound submissively to learn the truths of His religion, and apart from whom there can be no salvation? Again, if anyone acknowledges that Christ intended His people to be one, and that anyone commits a sin who makes causeless schisms and divisions in His body, he cannot justify his remaining separated in communion from the large numerical majority of the Christians of this country, if he thinks that his differences with them all relate to subordinate and trifling matters. For a man to say that he feels no interest in the Roman Catholic controversy, is to say that he thinks some of the most important religious questions that can be raised quite undeserving his attention; that he does not care to know what are the conditions which Christ has appointed for his salvation, and whether union with the Church of Rome be not one of them. I am persuaded that, if Romanism were true, it would be more tolerable in the Day of Judgment for a Protestant like myself, who has done his best to examine into the subject, and, however mistakenly, yet honestly, arrived at the conviction that the claims of Rome are unfounded, than for one who conceives himself entitled to indulge an eclectic sympathy with everything Roman that he, in his wisdom, may be pleased to call Catholic, but who disdains to inquire into the truth of other points of Roman teaching, and makes himself sure that he must be equally acceptable to God whether he be in the true Church or not.

I have just called myself a Protestant; and, in saying

this, I use the word in its popular sense, in which it is equivalent to non-Romanist. It is true that there are non-Romanists—for example, members of the Greek Church—to whom this name is not commonly applied; but this is because we come so little in contact with Eastern Christians, that popular usage takes no account of them. I am aware that there are several who dislike to be called Protestant, because the title is one which can be equally claimed by men differing widely in opinion, and with some of whom we have little in common but opposition to Rome. But a man must be a poor logician if he does not know that objects may agree in a common attribute, and with respect to that attribute may be called by a common name, though differing widely in other points. The controversy with Rome is so important, that it is highly convenient to have a word expressing what side a man takes on it: that is to say, whether he accepts or rejects the Roman claims. Indeed, in these Lectures, it is impossible for me to dispense with the use of some word of the kind. Finding the word Protestant* in common use for this purpose, I do not trouble myself to look for any other, but frankly describe myself as a Protestant. And if a controversial attempt is made to hold me responsible for the opinions of everyone else described under the same name, I do not expect to be more embarrassed than were the men of the early Church when their heathen opponents attempted to

* I consider that we are not concerned with the history of the word, which in its origin had nothing to do with protesting against the errors of Popery, but with protesting against the decrees of a Diet of the German Empire, viz. that of Spires, in 1529. At that Diet the liberty was taken away from the sovereign princes of the German Empire of regulating religious affairs each in his own territory, according to his discretion. Against that decree of the majority certain princes protested, and appealed to the Emperor, on the ground that the decree was *ultra vires*, for that a majority of votes in the Diet could regulate a secular question, but not a spiritual or religious one. But the decree being made in the interests of those who wished to keep everything as it had been, and the protest against it by those who were desirous of reformation, it naturally happened that the party of the protéstant princes and that of the Reformation should be synonymous. The word, however, has now come into popular use as denoting the non-Romanist members of the Western Church; and this use of the word is too convenient to be let drop. We are no more concerned with the history of its origin than we are with the Athenian laws about the exportation of figs when we use the word 'sycophant.'

hold them responsible for the opinions and practices of heretics who had in common with them the title of Christian.

By a Protestant, then, as I use the word, I mean one who has examined into the Roman claims, and has found reason to think them groundless; one who knows that there are not only great and precious truths on which we agree with the Church of Rome, but also points of difference so grave and fundamental as to justify our remaining in separate communion. If the Church of England or of Ireland be not, in this sense of the word, Protestant, her position cannot be defended at all. For her justification it is necessary to show not only that she is not bound to render any obedience to the Church of Rome, but also that the things demanded by that Church as conditions of union go beyond what one Church is bound to yield to another for the sake of godly union and concord among Christians, members of that one great Church of Christ, whose influence and extension through the world have notoriously been sadly impeded by internal dissensions and schisms.

Thus, from a Roman Catholic point of view, the more our Church purged herself from the sin of heresy, the greater would be the guilt of her schism; for the smaller the doctrinal differences, the less justifiable pretext there would be for separation. And I think a Roman Catholic must hold that the more a member of our Church approximates to the doctrine of Rome, the worse he makes his spiritual condition, if that approximation does not bring him to the bosom of the true Church. For such a man can no longer plead the excuse which an ultra-Protestant might urge, invincible ignorance incapacitating him for receiving the Church's teaching, which, in his sincere belief, is deeply tainted with peril of idolatry.* I need say no more, then, to convince you that our time this Term will not be ill spent in studying this

* See Newman's *Anglican Difficulties*, Lecture xi., where, having enlarged on the reasons which may excuse the unbelief of other persons outside the fold of his Church, he goes on to say that there is but one set of persons who inspire the Catholic with special anxiety, for whom he must feel the most intense interest, but about whom the gravest apprehensions, viz. those who have some rays of light vouchsafed them as to their heresy and as to their schism, and who seem to be closing their eyes upon it.

controversy, inasmuch as on the successful maintenance of it by our Church depends her right to be accounted part of the true Church of Christ, and since a wrong decision on it, it is alleged, hazards our eternal salvation.

Possibly there may be some here who have not needed argument to convince them of the importance of the controversy which I propose to discuss with you, but who may be disposed to imagine that no laborious study of it can be necessary. It is always irksome to be offered proof of what it has never occurred to us to doubt. The first impression of one who has been brought up from childhood to know and value his Bible is, that there is no room for discussion as to the truth of the Roman Catholic doctrines, and that a few Scripture texts make an end of the whole controversy. He cannot conceive what ingenuity can reconcile prayers in an unknown tongue with the fourteenth chapter of the First Epistle to the Corinthians; or the worship of the Virgin Mary with the text, 'There is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.' And assuredly, if we desire to preserve our people from defection to Romanism, there is no better safeguard than familiarity with Holy Scripture. For example, the mere study of the character of our Blessed Lord, as recorded in the Gospel, is enough to dissipate the idea that there can be others more loving and compassionate, or more ready to hear our prayers, than He. And the whole mental attitude of one who comes direct to the Bible for guidance, praying that God's Holy Spirit will enable him to understand it, is opposed to the Romish system, which renders difficult all real direct access between the soul and God, through the interposition of countless mediators both in interpreting God's will to us and in making known our desires to Him. Thus, believing as I do that the Bible, not merely in single texts, but in its whole spirit, is antagonistic to the Romish system, I feel that it would be time ill spent if I were to spend much, in these Lectures, on the development of the argument from Scripture. I should be well pleased if our adversaries were content to fight the battle on that ground; but the dis-

couragement which the Church of Rome has always offered to the study of the Bible by her people affords a presumption that she is against the Scriptures, because she feels the Scriptures are against her.

But you would be greatly disappointed if you entered into controversial discussion with a Roman Catholic, expecting that by a few texts you could make an end of the whole matter. No one is much influenced by an authority with which he is not familiar. Roman Catholics generally are not familiar with the Bible; and if they hear passages quoted from it in apparent contradiction with the doctrines in which they have been brought up, they are satisfied to believe, in a general way, that you must be quoting unfairly, and that the contradiction can only be apparent. With the Roman Catholic the authority of the Bible rests on the authority of the Church, and he receives with equal reverence and affection whatever else is communicated to him on the same authority. In arguing with a Protestant, he challenges him to say on what grounds he can justify his submission to the Bible if the authority of his Church be set aside; and he is quite ready to assail with infidel arguments the independent authority of the Bible. For Rome's maxim has been, 'All or none'; and, like the false mother before King Solomon, she has been ready to slay the souls whom she is unable to keep. Thus the inexperienced Protestant, engaging in this discussion, is likely to find the arguments on which he had placed most confidence set aside altogether, or the texts which had seemed to him conclusive disposed of by evasions quite new to him; while, on the other hand, he is plied with citations from ancient Fathers, purporting to show that his interpretations of Scripture are modern, and opposed to the judgment of all antiquity. Thus it frequently happens that an attack, begun with all the confidence of victory, ends in disappointment, and there is danger lest the disorder of failure should degenerate into total rout.

What I am insisting on, then, is that, in this controversy, it would be a fatal error to despise your antagonists. Very often has it happened that untrained bands, full of high

spirits, and confident in the goodness of their cause, have found that their undisciplined courage was no match for the superior science of their opponents, or have advanced into false positions, whence no courage could avail to extricate them. And so, unwary controversialists are apt to damage their cause by over-statements, to rest the success of their cause on the truth of assertions which cannot be proved, or on the validity of general principles which can be shown by cases of manifest exception not to be universally true. Now, the effect of a bad argument is always to damage the party who brings it forward; for, when that is refuted, it is not merely that the argument goes for nothing, but a general distrust is produced in the other arguments which are brought forward on the same side. If a book were written containing a hundred reasons for not admitting the claims of the Roman Church, and if ninety of them were thoroughly conclusive, a Roman Catholic advocate who could show that the other ten were weak would be regarded by his own party as having given a triumphant reply, and as having entirely demolished his opponent's case. And I believe that many a perversion to Romanism has resulted from the discovery by a member of our Church that some of the arguments on which he had been accustomed to rely were bad, and from his then rashly jumping to the conclusion that no better arguments were to be had.

For these reasons, if it should ever be your lot hereafter to engage in controversy, it will be essential to your success that you should have learned beforehand the strongest case that can be made by your opponents, in order that you may not be taken by surprise by anything likely to be advanced in the course of the discussion. You must be careful, also, to distinguish the authorized teaching of the Roman Catholic Church from the unguarded statements of particular divines, and not to charge the system as a whole with any consequences which Roman Catholics themselves repudiate. And, generally, you must beware of bad arguments, the fallacy of which, sooner or later, is sure to be exposed, when, like a gun bursting in the hand, they disable him who uses them. But there is a better reason for taking this course

than that it is the more prudent one. Our object is not victory, but truth; for the subject is one of such importance, that a victory gained at the expense of truth would be one in which we should ourselves be the chief sufferers—left blindly to wander from the truth, wilfully rejecting guidance which had been offered to us.

With regard to myself, I feel that the strength of my conviction of the baselessness of the case made by the Romish advocates removes any temptation to be niggardly in making any acknowledgment they can at all fairly claim. If you play chess with one to whom you know you can give the odds of a queen, you are not very solicitous to play the strict game. You allow your antagonist to take back moves if he will, and you are not much distressed in mind should he succeed in making some unimportant capture on which he has set his heart. I know that it is impossible to prove that the Pope can never go wrong, and quite possible to prove that in many cases he has gone wrong, and very seriously wrong; so it costs my liberality absolutely nothing to acknowledge that on many occasions he has gone right. If the dispute is concerning some Roman Catholic doctrine which I know to be no part of primitive Christianity, it costs me no effort of candour if I see reason to acknowledge that the date of its introduction was a century earlier than some Protestant controversialists had asserted.

On the other hand, the strength of my convictions may operate disadvantageously by rendering me unable to see any force in some Romish arguments, which, to other minds, seem very effective. When I take up some popular Roman Catholic books of controversy, although I am told they have been used with success in making perversions from our Church, they appear to me so feeble, that I feel little inclination to take the trouble of answering them.

But I own that, if it were not that the office which I hold imposes on me the disagreeable necessity, controversy is not to my taste, and I engage in it reluctantly. I read the writings of the Christian Fathers with a purely historical object, anxious to know how the men of former days believed and

taught, and quite prepared to find that on many points their way of looking at things is not the same as mine. I take up then books of controversy, and both on one side and on the other I find that those who originally made extracts from the writings of the Fathers were more anxious to pick out some sentence in apparent contradiction with the views of their opponents, than to weigh dispassionately whether the question at issue in the modern controversy were at all present to the mind of the author whom they quote, or to search whether elsewhere in his writings passages might not be found bearing a different aspect. The extracts thus picked out are copied, without verification, by one writer after another, so that, to one familiar with the controversy, books on it are apt to seem monotonous. And it constantly happens that at the present day controversial writers continue to employ quotations from writings once supposed to be genuine, but which all learned critics now know to be spurious. I feel little inclination to enter into a detailed exposure of errors of this kind. I have said already that, to an unlearned Christian, familiarity with the Bible affords the best safeguard against Romanism, and I will add now that a learned Christian, who makes himself familiar, by uncontroversial reading, with the thoughts of the men of the ancient Church, finds that he is breathing a different atmosphere from that of modern Romanism, and that he cannot accept many things now propounded as articles of faith, unless he is prepared to say that on many important questions we are wiser than the Fathers. That is what Roman Catholic advocates now actually say: but then they have no right to quarrel with Protestants who say the same.

In one respect I have an advantage in addressing an audience all of one way of thinking, that I am not bound to measure my words through fear of giving offence, and that when I think opinions false and absurd, I can plainly say so. Yet I should be sorry so to use this liberty of mine that my example should mislead you afterwards. In every controversy the Christian teacher should put away all bitterness, 'in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves.' In

this controversy we have to deal with those whose feelings of piety and reverence have in part fastened themselves on unworthy objects; and it requires a skilful hand gently to disengage these feelings, and give them a better training—not tear them up and kill them. We assail credulity, not faith; and we cannot use the weapons of those who deny the supernatural, and refuse to lift their thoughts above material things.

Your future success in controversy, should it be your lot to engage in it, may depend much on the strength of your faith in truths not controverted. For no one is much influenced by those with whom he has no sympathies; and your influence on those whom you would most wish to gain, and whom there is most hope of gaining—those, I mean, who truly love our Lord, and whose will to do His will has the promise of being blessed by the guidance of His Spirit into truth—must depend on yourselves being animated by the same love, and seeking for the guidance of the same Spirit.

In the interests, then, of controversy itself, I might give the concluding caution, which I should in any case have added for the sake of your own spiritual health, namely, that you should not allow the pleasure which intellectual combat has for many minds to detain you too long in the thorny paths of controversy, and out of those pastures where your soul must find its nourishment. 'I love not,' says Taylor, 'to be one of the disputers of this world. For I suppose skill in controversies to be the worst part of learning, and time is the worst spent in them, and men the least benefited by them.' When we must engage in controversy, it is not that we love contention, but that we love the truth which is at stake. Seek, then, in study of the Scriptures to know the truth, and pray that God will inspire you with a sincere love of it—of the whole truth, and not merely of that portion of it which it may be your duty to defend—and ask Him also to inspire you with a sincere love of your brethren: so that the end of all your controversy may be, not the display of your own skill in arguing, not the obtaining of victory for yourself or for your party, but the mutual edification of all who take part in it, and their growth in likeness to Christ.

II.

THE CARDINAL IMPORTANCE OF THE QUESTION OF INFALLIBILITY.

YOU will easily understand that it would be absolutely impossible for me, in the course of these Lectures, to go through all the details of the Roman Catholic controversy. You have in your hands text-books which will give you information on all the most important points. But the truth is, that the issues of the controversy mainly turn on one great question, which is the only one that I expect to be able to discuss with you—I mean the question of the Infallibility of the Church. If that be decided against us, our whole case is gone, and victories on the details of the controversy would profit us as little as, to use a favourite illustration of Archbishop Whately's, it profits a chess-player to win some pieces and pawns if he gets his king checkmated. In fact, suppose we make what seems to ourselves a quite convincing proof that some doctrine of the Roman Church is not contained in Scripture, what does that avail if we are forced to own that that Church has access to other sources of information besides Scripture as to the doctrine taught by our Lord and His Apostles? Suppose we even consider that we have proved a Roman doctrine to be contrary to Scripture, what does that avail if we are compelled to acknowledge that we are quite incompetent to decide what is Scripture or what is the meaning of it, and if it belongs to the Church of Rome alone to give us the book and to teach us its true interpretation? In like manner, if our study of history should lead us to the conclusion that the teaching of the present Church is at variance

with the teaching of the Church of former days, we are forced to surrender this ill-grounded suspicion of ours if we are made to believe that the Church cannot err, and, as a necessary consequence, that her teaching must be at all times the same.

One can scarcely open any book that attempts to deal with controversy by such a Roman Catholic as, for instance, Cardinal Manning, without being forced to observe how his faith in the infallibility of the present Church makes him impenetrable to all arguments. Suppose, for example, the question in dispute is the Pope's personal infallibility, and that you object to him the case of Honorius: he replies, At most you could make out that it is *doubtful* whether Honorius was orthodox; but it is *certain* that a Pope could not be a heretic. Well, you reply, at least the case of Honorius shows that the Church of the time supposed that a Pope could be a heretic. Not so, he answers, for the Church now holds that a Pope speaking *ex cathedra* cannot err, and the Church *could* not have taught differently at any other time.

Thus, as long as anyone really believes in the infallibility of his Church, he is proof against any argument you can ply him with. Conversely, when faith in this principle is shaken, belief in some other Roman Catholic doctrine is sure also to be disturbed; for there are some of these doctrines in respect of which nothing but a very strong belief that the Roman Church cannot decide wrongly will prevent a candid inquirer from coming to the conclusion that she has decided wrongly. This simplification, then, of the controversy realizes for us the wish of the Roman tyrant that all his enemies had but one neck. If we can but strike one blow, the whole battle is won.

If the vital importance of this question of Infallibility had not been sufficiently evident from *a priori* considerations, I should have been convinced of it from the history of the Roman Catholic controversy as it has been conducted in my own lifetime. When I first came to an age to take lively interest in the subject, Dr. Newman and his coadjutors were publishing, in the *Tracts for the Times*, excellent refuta-

tions of the Roman doctrine on Purgatory and some other important points. A very few years afterwards, without making the smallest attempt to answer their own arguments, these men went over to Rome, and bound themselves to believe and teach as true things which they had themselves proved to be false. The accounts which those who went over in that movement gave of their reasons for the change show surprising indifference to the ordinary topics of the controversy, and in some cases leave us only obscurely to discern why they went at all. It was natural that many who witnessed the sudden collapse of the resistance which had been offered to Roman Catholic teaching should conclude that it had been a sham fight all along; but this was unjust. It rather resembled what not unfrequently occurs in the annals of warfare when, after entrenchments have been long and obstinately assaulted without success, some great general has taken up a position which has caused them to be evacuated without a struggle.

While the writers of the *Tracts* were assailing with success different points of Roman teaching, they allowed themselves to be persuaded that Christ must have provided His people with some infallible guide to truth; and they accepted the Church of Rome as that guide, with scarcely an attempt to make a careful scrutiny of the grounds of her pretensions, and merely because, if she were not that guide, they knew not where else to find it. Thus, when they were beaten on the one question of Infallibility, their victories on other points availed them nothing.

Perhaps those who then submitted to the Church of Rome scarcely realized all that was meant in their profession of faith in their new guide. They may have thought it meant no more than belief that everything the Church of Rome then taught was infallibly true. Events soon taught them that it meant besides that they must believe everything that that Church might afterwards teach; and her subsequent teaching put so great a strain on the faith of the new converts, that in a few cases it was more than it could bear.

The idea that the doctrine of the Church of Rome is

always the same is one which no one of the present day can hold without putting an enormous strain on his understanding. It used to be the boast of Romish advocates that the teaching of their Church was unchangeable. Heretics, they used to say, show by their perpetual alterations that they never have had hold of the truth. They move the ancient landmarks without themselves foreseeing whither their new principles will lead them; and so after a while, discovering their position to be untenable, they vainly try by constant changes to reduce their system to some semblance of consistency. Our Church, on the contrary, they said, ever teaches the same doctrine which has been handed down from the Apostles, and has since been taught 'everywhere, always, and by all.' Divines of our Church used to expose the falsity of this boast by comparing the doctrine now taught in the Church of Rome with that taught in the Church of early times, and thus established by historical proof that a change had occurred. But now the matter has been much simplified; for no laborious proof is necessary to show that that is not unchangeable which has changed under our very eyes. The rate of change is not like that of the hour-hand of a watch, which you must note at some considerable intervals of time in order to see that there has been a movement, but rather like that of the second-hand, which you can actually see moving.

The first trial of the faith of the new converts was the definition of the dogma of the Immaculate Conception, in 1852, when a doctrine was declared to be the universal ancient tradition of the Church, on which eminent divines had notoriously held different opinions, so much so, that this diversity had been accounted for by Bishop Milner and other controversialists by the assertion that neither Scripture nor tradition contained anything on the subject.

The manner of that decree, intended to bind the universal Church, was remarkable. It was not a vote of a council. Bishops, indeed, had been previously consulted, and bishops were assembled to hear the decision; but the decision rested on the authority of the Pope alone. It was correctly foreseen

that what was then done was intended to establish a precedent. I remember then how the news came that the Pope proposed to assemble a council, and how those who had the best right to know predicted that this council was to terminate the long controversy as to the relative superiority of popes and councils, by owning the personal infallibility of the Pope, and so making it unnecessary that any future council should be held. This announcement created the greatest ferment in the Roman Catholic Church; and those who passed for the men of highest learning in that communion, and who had been wont to be most relied on, when learned Protestants were to be combated, opposed with all their might the contemplated definition, as an entire innovation on the traditional teaching of the Church, and as absolutely contradicted by the facts of history. These views were shared by Dr. Newman. His own inclinations had not favoured any extravagant cult of the Virgin Mary, and he was too well acquainted with Church History not to know that the doctrine of her Immaculate Conception was a complete novelty, unknown to early times, and, when first put forward, condemned by some of the most esteemed teachers of the Church. But when the Pope formally promulgated that doctrine as part of the essential faith of the Church, he had submitted in silence. When, however, it was proposed to declare the Pope's personal infallibility, this was a doctrine so directly in the teeth of history, that Newman made no secret, not only of his own disbelief of the doctrine, but also of his persuasion that the authoritative adoption of it would be attended with ruinous consequences to his Church, by placing what seemed an insuperable obstacle to any man of learning entering her fold. He wrote in passionate alarm to an English Roman Catholic bishop: 'Why,' he said, 'should an insolent aggressive faction be allowed to make the heart of the just sad, whom the Lord hath not made sorrowful? I pray those early doctors of the Church, whose intercession would decide the matter (Augustine, Ambrose, and Jerome, Athanasius, Chrysostom, and Basil), to avert this great calamity. If it is God's will that the Pope's infallibility be

defined, then it is God's will to throw back the times and moments of the triumph which He has destined for His kingdom; and I shall feel that I have but to bow my head to His inscrutable Providence.'*

Abundant proof that the new dogma had, until then, been no part of the faith of the Church, was furnished by von Döllinger, at the time deservedly reputed to be the most learned man in the Roman communion, and amongst others by two Munich professors, who, under the name of Janus, published a work containing a mass of historical proofs of the novelty of the proposed decree. These arguments were urged by able bishops at the Vatican Council itself. But the Pope carried out his project in the teeth of historical demonstration. A few of the most learned of the protesters against the new dogma refused to recognize the doctrine thus defined as that of the Catholic Church, and formed a schism, calling themselves 'Old Catholics.' But the bulk of the people had no inclination to trouble themselves with historical investigations, and accepted, without inquiry, what their rulers were pleased to offer them; and a number of the eminent men, who had not only denied the truth of the new dogma, but had proved its falsity to the satisfaction of every reasoning man, finding no other choice open to them, unless they abandoned every theory as to the infallibility of the Church which they had previously maintained, and unless they joined a schism which, as was foreseen at the time, and as the event proved, would be insignificant in numbers, preferred to eat their words, and to profess faith in what it is difficult to think they could in their hearts have believed to be true.

I own, the first impression produced by this history is one of discouragement. It seems hopeless to waste research or argument on men who have shown themselves determined not to be convinced. What hope is there that argument of mine can convince men who are not convinced by their own arguments? As long as there was a chance of saving their Church from committing herself to a decision in the teeth of

* Letter published in the *Standard*, April 7, 1870. See *Edinburgh Review*, cxxxiv. 145.

history, they struggled to avert the calamity; showing by irrefragable arguments that the early Church never regarded the Pope to be infallible, and that different Popes had made decisions glaringly false. But having clearly shown that black was not white, no sooner had authority declared that it was than they professed themselves ready to believe it.

But though it is, on the first view, disappointing that our adversaries should withdraw themselves into a position seemingly inaccessible to argument, it is really, as I shall presently show, a mark of our success that they have been driven from the open field, and forced to betake themselves into this fortress. And we have every encouragement to follow them, and assault their citadel, which is now their last refuge.

In other words, it has now become more clear than ever that the whole Roman Catholic controversy turns on the decision of the one question—the Infallibility of the Church. We have just seen how the admission of this principle can force men to surrender their most deep-rooted beliefs, which they had maintained with the greatest heat, and to the assertion of which they had committed themselves most strongly. They surrendered these beliefs solely in deference to external authority, though themselves unable to see any flaw in the arguments which had persuaded them of the truth of them. And I must say that, in making this surrender, they were better and more consistent Roman Catholics than von Döllinger and his friends, who refused to eat their words and turn their back on their own arguments. For all their lives long they had condemned the exercise of private judgment, and had insisted on the necessity of submitting to the authority of the Church. Now, if you accept the Church's teaching just so long as it agrees with what you, on other grounds, persuade yourselves to be true, and reject it as soon as it differs from your own judgment, that is not real submission to the authority of the Church. You do not take a man as a guide, though you may be travelling along a road in his company, if you are willing to part company if he should make a turn of which you disapprove. It matters not what

Romish doctrines the German Old Catholic party may continue to hold. They may believe Transubstantiation, Purgatory, Invocation of Saints, and more. But from the moment they ventured to use their reason, and reject a dogma propounded to them by their Church, they were really Protestants; they had adopted the great principle of Protestantism. And so, at the time of the formation of the Old Catholic party, I expressed my fears in a lecture here that its members would be able to find no home in the Roman Church. My fears, I say, for I count it a thing to be regretted that that Church, by casting out her most learned and most enlightened members, should lose all chance of recovering the truth by reform from within.

If, however, there could ever be a case where men should be constrained by a *reductio ad absurdum* to abandon a principle they had held, but which had been shown to lead to consequences certainly false, it was when the men of the Old Catholic party found that if they were to go on maintaining the infallibility of their Church, they must also assert that she never had changed her doctrine. If, previous to the Vatican Council, the Church of Rome had known the doctrine of the Pope's personal infallibility to be true, she had, somehow or another, so neglected to teach it, that though it is a doctrine relating to the very foundation of her religious system, her priests and bishops had been ignorant that it was any part of her teaching. The Infallibilist party at Rome had been obliged, at an early stage of their exertions, to get placed on the Prohibitory Index, Bailly's work on Theology, which had been used as a text-book at Maynooth. Would not any Roman Catholic say that the Church of Ireland had changed her doctrine if the text-books which you use here were not only removed from your course, but if the Irish bishops published a declaration that these books, in which their predecessors had been wont to examine candidates for orders, contained erroneous doctrine, and were on that account unfit to be read by our people?

Again, the effect of the Vatican Council was to necessitate great changes in controversial catechisms. One might

think that the clergymen who might be supposed best acquainted with the doctrines of their Church are those who are selected to conduct controversy with opponents. In our Church, indeed, anyone may engage in controversy at his own discretion, and need not necessarily be the most learned or wisest of our body; but the controversial catechisms of the Roman Church are only issued with the permission of the writer's superiors, and therefore their statements as to Roman Catholic doctrine may be supposed to tell what the best informed members of the communion believe that she teaches. Now, it had been a common practice with Roman Catholic controversial writers, when pressed with objections against the doctrine of the personal infallibility of the Pope, to repudiate that doctrine altogether, and to declare it to be a Protestant misrepresentation to assert that it was taught by their Church.

I may afterwards have occasion to say something about books which circulated in America, but will now mention one to which my own attention happened to be specially drawn. The controversial book which, thirty years ago, was most relied on in this country was 'Keenan's Catechism,' a book published with the *imprimatur* of Scotch Roman Catholic bishops, and recommended also by Irish prelates. This book contained the following question and answer:—

'*Q.* Must not Catholics believe the Pope in himself to be infallible?

'*A.* This is a Protestant invention: it is no article of the Catholic faith: no decision of his can oblige, under pain of heresy, unless it be received and enforced by the teaching body; that is, by the bishops of the Church.'

About 1869 or 1870 I had a visit from an English clergyman, who, for reasons of health, resided chiefly on the Continent, and, mixing much with Roman Catholics, took great interest in the controversy which was then agitating their Church. I showed him the question and answer in 'Keenan's Catechism'; and he was so much interested by them, that he bought some copies of the book to present to his friends abroad. A couple of years later he visited Ireland again, and purchased some more copies of 'Keenan'; but this

question and answer had then disappeared. He presented me then with the two copies I have here. To all appearance they are identical in their contents. From the title-page, as it appears on the paper cover of each, the two books appear to be both of the twenty-first thousand; but when we open the books, we find them further agreeing in the singular feature, that there is another title-page which describes each as of the twenty-fourth thousand. But at page 112 the question and answer which I have quoted are to be found in the one book, and are absent from the other. It is, therefore, impossible now to maintain that the faith of the Church of Rome never changes, when it is notorious that there is something which is now part of her faith which those who had a good right to know declared was no part of her faith twenty years ago.

I will not delay to speak of many changes in Roman teaching consequent on the definition of Papal Infallibility; but you can easily understand that there are a great many statements officially made by several Popes which, inasmuch as they rested on papal authority alone, learned Roman Catholics had formerly thought themselves at liberty to reject, but which must now be accepted as articles of faith. But what I wish now to speak of is, that the forced confession of change, at least by way of addition, in Roman teaching has necessitated a surrender of the principles on which her system had formerly been defended; and this was what I had specially in mind when I spoke of the fortress of Infallibility as the last refuge of a beaten army, who, when driven from this, must fall into total rout.

The first revolt against Romanism took place when the Bible was made easily accessible. When, by means of translations printed in the vulgar languages of Europe, a knowledge of the New Testament became general, men could not help taking notice that the Christianity then taught by the Church was a very different thing from that which was preached by the Apostles, and that a host of doctrines were taught as necessary to salvation by the modern Church, of which, as far as we could learn from the Bible, the early

Church knew nothing. Whether the doctrines of Romanism can be proved from the Bible is a matter which you can judge for yourselves; but if there is any doubt about it, that doubt is removed by watching the next stage of the controversy. The Roman Catholic advocates ceased to insist that the doctrines of the Church could be deduced from Scripture; but the theory of some early heretics, refuted by Irenæus, was revived, namely, that the Bible does not contain the whole of God's revelation, and that a body of traditional doctrine existed in the Church equally deserving of veneration.

At this time, however, all parties were agreed that through our Lord and His Apostles a revelation unique in the history of the world had been made to mankind. All parties imagined that it was the truths then made known, neither more nor less, that the Church was to preserve and teach. All parties agreed that the Holy Scriptures might be implicitly depended on as an inspired record of these truths. The main difference was as to how far the Bible record of them could be regarded as complete. Things were taught and practised in the Roman Church for which the Bible furnished no adequate justification; and the Roman advocates insisted that, though the Bible contained truth, it did not contain the whole truth, and that the Church was able, by her traditions, to supplement the deficiencies of Scripture, having in those traditions a secure record of apostolic teaching on many points on which the Bible contained only obscure indications, or even gave no information at all.

This Roman assertion might be met in two ways. Many, probably the majority, of the Protestants refused to listen at all to doctrines said to be binding on their faith, and not asserted to be taught in Scripture; and we shall afterwards see that they had the sanction of several of the most eminent Fathers for thinking that what was asserted without the authority of Holy Scripture might be 'despised as freely as approved.'* But there were champions of our Church who met the Roman case in another way. They declared that, as they had been convinced by historical proof that the books

* Hieron. *in Matt.* xxiii.

of the New Testament were written by Apostles or apostolical men, so they had no objection to examine whether similar historic proof could be given of the apostolic origin of any of the peculiar doctrines of Romanism.

Bellarmine, indeed, had given as one of his rules for knowing whether or not the proof of a Church doctrine rested on tradition,* that if a doctrine taught by the Church could not be proved by Scripture, it must be proved by tradition; for the Church could not teach wrong; and so the doctrine must be proved either in the one way or the other. But it would be too much to expect from us that we should admit a failure of Scripture proof in itself to constitute a proof by tradition. We have a right to ask, If the Church learned that doctrine by tradition, where has that tradition been recorded? Who are the ancient authors that mention it? If the thing has been handed down from the Apostles, the Church of the first centuries must have believed or practised it: let us inquire, as we should in the case of any other historical question, whether she did or not.

Bishop Jewel, in his celebrated challenge, enumerated twenty-seven points of the Roman Catholic teaching of his day, and declared that if any learned man of our adversaries, or all the learned men that be alive, were able to bring any one sufficient sentence out of any old Catholic Doctor or Father, or General Council, or Holy Scripture, or any one example in the Primitive Church, whereby it might be clearly and plainly proved that any of them was taught for the first 600 years, then he would be content to yield and subscribe. Not, of course, that Jewel meant that a single instance of a doctrine being taught during the first six centuries was enough to establish its truth, but he meant to express his strong conviction that in the case of the twenty-seven doctrines he enumerated no such instance could be produced.

I do not wonder that many Protestants looked on this historic method as a very perilous way of meeting the claims of Romanism. In the first place, it deserted the ground of Scripture, on which they felt sure of victory, for that of his-

* *De verbo Dei*, iv. 9.

tory, on which success might be doubtful; and, in the second place, it needed no learned apparatus to embark on the Scripture controversy. Any intelligent layman might satisfy himself what amount of recognition was given to a doctrine in the Bible; but the battle on the field of history could only be fought by learned men, and would go on out of sight of ordinary members of the Church, who would be quite incompetent to tell which way the victory had gone.

When two opposing generals meet in battle, and both send home bulletins of victory, and *Te Deums* are sung in churches on both sides, we, who sit at home, may find it hard to understand which way the battle has gone. But if we look at the map, and see where the next battle is fought, and if we find that one general is making 'for strategic reasons' a constant succession of movements towards the rear, and that he ends by completely evacuating the country he at first undertook to defend, then we may suspect that his glorious victories were perhaps not quite so brilliant as he had represented them to be. And so, when the Church of England champions left the plain ground of Scripture, and proceeded to interchange quotations from the Fathers, plain men, out of whose sight the battle now went, might be excused for apprehension as to the results, themselves being scarcely competent to judge of the force of the passages quoted on each side. But when they find that the heads of the Roman Catholic Church now think it as great a heresy to appeal to antiquity, as to appeal to Scripture, they have cause for surmising which way the victory has gone.

The first strategic movement towards the rear was the doctrine of development, which has seriously modified the old theory of tradition. When Dr. Newman became a Roman Catholic, it was necessary for him in some way to reconcile this step with the proofs he had previously given that certain distinctive Romish doctrines were unknown to the early Church. The historical arguments he had advanced in his Anglican days were incapable of refutation even by himself. But it being hopeless to maintain that the present teaching of Roman Catholics is identical with the doctrine held in the

primitive Church, he set himself to show that though not the same, it was a great deal better. This is the object of the celebrated Essay on the *Development of Christian Doctrine*, which he published simultaneously with his submission to the Roman Church. The theory expounded in it in substance is, that Christ had but committed to His Church certain seeds and germs of truth, destined afterwards to expand to definite forms: consequently, that our Lord did not intend that the teaching of His Church should be always the same; but ordained that it should go on continually improving under the guidance of His Holy Spirit. This theory was not altogether new. Not to speak of earlier anticipations of it, it had been maintained, not many years previously, by the German divine, Möhler, in his work called *Symbolik;* and this mode of defending the Roman system had been adopted in the theological lectures of Perrone, Professor in the Jesuit College at Rome. But Newman's book had the effect of making the theory popular to an extent it had never been before, and of causing its general adoption by Romish advocates, who are now content to exchange tradition, which their predecessors had made the basis of their system, for this new foundation of development. You will find them now making shameless confession of the novelty of articles of their creed, and even taunting us Anglicans with the unprogressive character of our faith, because we are content to believe as the early Church believed, and as our fathers believed before us.

In a subsequent lecture I mean to discuss this theory of development: I only mention it now because the starting of this theory exhibits plainly the total rout which the champions of the Roman Church experienced in the battle they attempted to fight on the field of history. The theory of development is, in short, an attempt to enable men, beaten off the platform of history, to hang on to it by the eyelids. Suppose, for instance, we have made a strong proof that some doctrine or practice of modern Romanism was unknown to the primitive Church, we might still find it difficult to show that this general proposition of ours admitted of absolutely no exception. Did no one *ever* in the first centuries teach or

practise the thing in dispute? or, if not absolutely the same thing, something like it? something only to be defended on the same principles, or which, if pushed to its logical consequences, might justify the present state of things? Then the argument is applied, Any practice which was tolerated in the first age of the Church cannot be absolutely wrong, and though it may have been in those days exceptional, still the Church may, for reason that seems to her good, make it her general rule now. And a doctrinal principle once acknowledged, though it may be without its full import being known, must now be accepted with all the logical consequences that can be shown to be involved in it.

Thus, to take an example of a practice: it is not denied that the refusal of the cup to the laity is absolutely opposed to the custom of the Church for centuries; but it is thought to be sufficient justification of Roman usage if we are unable to prove that in the early ages absolutely no such thing ever occurred as communion in one element without the other. Or, to take an example of a doctrine, we inquire whether the Church of the first three centuries thought it necessary to seek for the intercession of the Virgin Mary, or thought it right to pay her the extravagant honours which Roman Catholics now have no scruple in bestowing on her. There is no pretence of answering these questions in the affirmative. It is thought reply enough to ask in return, Did not the ancient Church teach the fact of the intimate relation that existed between the blessed Virgin and the human nature of our Lord? Surely yes, we confess, we acknowledge that ourselves. Then, it is urged, the later Church is entitled to draw out by legitimate inference all that it can discover as to the privileges which that intimate relation must needs have conferred, even though the earlier Church had been blind to them.

When Dr. Newman's book appeared, I looked with much curiosity to see whether the heads of the Church to which he was joining himself would accept the defence made by their new convert, the book having been written before he had yet joined them. For, however great the ingenuity of this

defence, and whatever important elements of truth it might contain, it seemed to be plainly a complete abandonment of the old traditional theory of the advocates of Rome.

The old theory was that the teaching of the Church had never varied. Scripture proof of the identity of her teaching in all ages might fail; but tradition could not fail to prove that what the Church teaches now she had also taught from the beginning. Thus, for example, the Council of Trent, in the celebrated decree passed in its fourth Session, in which it laid the foundation of its whole method of proceeding, clearly taught that all saving truth and moral discipline had been delivered either by the mouth of Christ Himself, or by His inspired Apostles, and had since been handed down either in the Scriptures, or in continuous unwritten tradition; and the Council, in particular decrees passed subsequently, claimed for its teaching to have been what the Church had always taught.* No phrase has been more often on the lips of Roman controversialists than that which described the faith of the Church as what was held 'everywhere, always, and by all.'† Bishop Milner, in his well-known work, of which I shall have more to say in another lecture, *The End of Religious Controversy*, writes: 'It is a fundamental maxim never to admit any tenet but such as is believed by all the bishops, and was believed by their predecessors *up to the Apostles* themselves.' 'The constant language of the Church is *nil innovetur*, *nil nisi quod traditum est.* Such and such is the sense of Scripture, such and such is the doctrine of her predecessors, the Pastors of the Church, since the time of the Apostles.' Dr. Wiseman said: 'We believe that no new doctrine can be introduced into the Church, but that every doctrine which we hold has existed and been taught in it ever since the time of the Apostles, having been handed down by them to their successors.'‡

It is worth while to call attention to another point in the

* So for example in the decree concerning matrimony (Sess. xxiv.), 'Sancti patres nostri, et concilia, et universalis ecclesiæ traditio *semper* docuerunt.'

† Vincent. Lirin. *Commonitorium*, c. 3.

‡ Wiseman, *Moorfield Lectures*, i. 60. London: 1847.

decree of the Council of Trent to which I referred just now—namely, the value it attached to the consent of the Fathers as a decisive authority in the interpretation of Scripture. The veneration for the Fathers so solemnly expressed at Trent has been handed down as an essential part of popular Romanism. Let the most unlearned Romanist and an equally unlearned Protestant get into a discussion, and let the Fathers be mentioned, and you may probably hear their authority treated with contempt by the Protestant, but assuredly it will be treated as decisive by the Romanist. Now, this making the authority of the Fathers the rule and measure of our judgment is absolutely inconsistent with the theory of Development. In every progressive science the latest authority is the best. Take mathematics, which is in its nature as immutable as any theory can represent theology to be, and in which what has once been proved to be true can never afterwards come into question; yet even there the older authors are only looked into as a matter of curiosity, to illustrate the history of the progress of the science, but have no weight as authorities. We study the science from modern books, which contain everything of value that the older writers discovered—possibly may correct some mistakes of theirs, but certainly will contain much of which they were ignorant. And, in like manner, anyone who holds the theory of Development ought, in consistency, to put the writings of the Fathers on the shelf as antiquated and obsolete. Their teaching, judged by the standard of the present day, must certainly be defective, and might even be erroneous. In point of fact, there is scarcely one of the Fathers who does not occasionally come into collision with modern Roman teaching, and for whom it is not necessary to find apologies. A good deal of controversial triumph took place when, by the publication of certain expurgatorial indices, it was brought to light that the Roman authorities regarded certain genuine *dicta* of early Fathers as erroneous, and as needing correction. But if the Development theory be true, it is only proper that the inaccuracies of the time when Church teaching was immature should be corrected by the light of fuller knowledge. It

follows that the traditional veneration of the Fathers in the Roman Church is a witness of the novelty of the theory of Development.

But, more than a century before Dr. Newman's time, the theory of Development had played its part in the Roman Catholic controversy; only then it was the Protestant combatant who brought that theory forward, and the Roman Catholic who repudiated it. I shall have occasion in another lecture to speak of the controversial work published by Bossuet, who was accounted the most formidable champion of the Church of Rome towards the end of the seventeenth century. The thesis of his book called *History of the Variations of the Protestant Churches* was that the doctrine of the true Church is always the same, whereas Protestants are at variance with each other and with themselves. Bossuet was replied to by a Calvinist minister named Jurieu. The line Jurieu took was to dispute the assertion that the doctrine of the true Church is always the same. He maintained the doctrine of Development in its full extent, asserting that the truth of God was only known by instalments (*par parcelles*), that the theology of the Fathers was imperfect and fluctuating, and that Christian theology has been constantly going on towards perfection. He illustrated his theory by examples of important doctrines, concerning which he alleged the teaching of the early Church to have been defective or uncertain, of which it is enough here to quote that he declared that the mystery of the Trinity, though of the last importance, and essential to Christianity, remained, 'as everyone knows,' undeveloped (*informe*) down to the first Council of Nicæa, and even down to that of Constantinople. Bossuet, in replying, had the embarrassment, if he felt it as such, that a learned divine of his own Church and nation—the Jesuit Petau, whose name is better known under its Latinized form, Petavius—had, in his zeal to make Church authority the basis of all religious knowledge, made very similar assertions concerning the immaturity of the teaching of the early Fathers. Plainly, if Jurieu could establish his case, the whole foundation of Bossuet's great controversial work would

be swept away. It would be impossible to taunt Protestants because their teaching had not been always the same, if it must be confessed that the same thing must be said of the Church in every age. But it would be unjust to imagine that Bossuet was actuated merely by controversial ardour in the indignant and passionate outcry which he raised against Jurieu's theory, or to doubt that that theory was deeply painful and shocking to him on account of its aspersion on the faith of the early Church. He declared the statement that the mystery of the Trinity remained undeveloped down to the Council of Nicæa to be a horrible libel (*flétrissure*) on Christianity, to be language which could only have been expected from the mouth of a Socinian. He appealed to the contemporary work of our own divine, Bishop Bull (*Defensio Fidei Nicenae*), in which the doctrine of Nicæa was established by the testimony of ante-Nicene Fathers, a work for which Bossuet had communicated the thanks of himself and his clergy. He declared it to be the greatest of errors to imagine that the faith of the Church only developed itself as heresies arose, and as she made explicit decisions concerning them. And he reiterated his own thesis, that the faith of the Church, as being a Divine work, had its perfection from the first, and had never varied; and that the Church never pronounced any judgments, except by way of propounding the faith of the past.* The name of Bossuet is, for reasons of which I shall speak on another day, not popular with the Ultramontane party now dominant in the Roman Church; but there is no doubt that, in his day, he was not only the accredited champion of that Church, but the most successful in gaining converts from Protestantism. It seems, then, a very serious matter if the leading authorities in the Roman Church have now to own that, in the main point at issue between Bossuet and Jurieu, the Calvinist minister was in the right, and their own champion in the wrong.

Now, in Newman's *Essay on Development*, everything that had been said by Jurieu or by Petavius as to the immaturity

* The statements in the text are taken from Bossuet's *Prémier avertissement aux Protestants*.

of the teaching of the early Fathers is said again, and said more strongly. He begins by owning the unserviceableness of St. Vincent's maxim: 'Quod semper, quod ubique, quod ab omnibus.' He confesses that it is impossible by means of that maxim (unless, indeed, a very forced interpretation be put upon it) to establish the articles of Pope Pius's creed; in other words, impossible to show that these articles were any part of the faith of the early Church. But he urges that the same thing may be said of the Athanasian Creed, and he proceeds to try to pick holes in the proofs Bishop Bull had given of the orthodoxy of the ante-Nicene Fathers. So he declares that we need some new hypothesis for the defence of the Athanasian Creed, for which purpose he offers his theory of Development; and then he says that we must not complain if the same defence proves to be equally good for the creed of Pope Pius.

I can remember my own astonishment at this line of defence, and my wonder how it would be accepted by Roman Catholic authorities. There appeared to be signs that it would be received with disfavour; for Brownson's *Quarterly Review*, the leading organ of American Romanism, published a series of articles severely criticizing the book, as abandoning the ground on which Roman doctrine had previously been defended, giving up, as it did, the principles that the Church taught nothing but what had been revealed, and that the revelation committed to the Church had been perfect from the first.

But when I was simple enough to expect that Roman Catholic divines generally would thus repudiate a work inconsistent with what their teachers had constantly maintained, I failed to notice what a temptation Newman offered by freeing the defenders of Romanism at once from a multitude of controversies in which they felt they were getting the worst. He evacuated all the difficult posts which they had been struggling to maintain, and promised that the captors should gain nothing by taking them, for that he had built inside them an impregnable wall of defence. Just imagine what a comfort it must have been to a poor Roman Catholic

divine who had been making a despairing struggle to refute, let us say, the Protestant assertion that the Church of the first three centuries knew nothing of the Invocation of the Blessed Virgin, to be told that he need have no scruple in granting all that his opponents had asserted. Dr. Newman himself, disclaiming the doctrine that the Invocation of the Virgin is necessary to salvation, says (*Letter to Pusey*, p. 111): 'If it were so, there would be grave reasons for doubting of the salvation of St. Chrysostom or St. Athanasius, or of the primitive martyrs. Nay, I should like to know whether St. Augustine, in all his voluminous writings, invokes her once.' But he holds (p. 63) that, though 'we have no proof that Athanasius himself had any special devotion to the Blessed Virgin,' yet, by teaching the doctrine of our Lord's Incarnation, 'he laid the foundations on which that devotion was to rest.'

Similarly, if perplexed by troublesome proofs that early Fathers were ignorant of the doctrine of purgatorial fire, or of the religious use of images, or of the supremacy of the Pope, what a comfort to be told, You may safely answer, 'Quite true: these doctrines had not been revealed to the consciousness of the Church of that age';—nay, to be told that he need not quarrel with Arian representations of the doctrine of the ante-Nicene Fathers, but might say, 'Quite true: the Church did not learn to speak accurately on this subject until after the Council of Nicæa.' The enlightened Roman Catholic of the new school may take the same view that a dispassionate infidel might have taken about the controversy which Anglicans and old-school Roman Catholics had been waging as to which of them held the doctrines originally revealed by Christ and taught by His Apostles. An infidel might say, 'Neither of you. The doctrines taught by Jesus of Nazareth have been since incorporated with a number of elements derived from different sources, and the Christianity of the first century is not like what is taught by anyone in the nineteenth.'

Thus, you will see that the doctrine of Development concedes not only all that a Protestant, but even all that an

infidel might ask. I purpose, in a subsequent lecture, to say something more in reference to this doctrine. At present my main object has been to show the primary importance of the question of Infallibility, which has really swallowed up all other controversies. It is inevitable, indeed, that other branches of the controversy should have a tendency to die out when a candid Roman Catholic is forced to concede what his opponents assert. An unlearned Protestant perceives that the doctrine of Rome is not the doctrine of the Bible. A learned Protestant adds that neither is it the doctrine of the primitive Church. These assertions are no longer denied, as in former days. Putting the concessions made us at the lowest, it is at least owned that the doctrine of Rome is as unlike that of early times as an oak is unlike an acorn, or a butterfly unlike a caterpillar. The unlikeness is admitted: and the only question remaining is whether that unlikeness is absolutely inconsistent with substantial identity. In other words, it is owned that there has been a change, and the question is whether we are to call it development or corruption.

But you must carefully observe that the doctrine of Development would be fatal to the Roman Catholic cause if separated from the doctrine of the Infallibility of the Church. Without the latter doctrine the former, as I have already pointed out, leads to Protestantism or to infidelity rather than Romanism. In fact, the motto of the doctrine of Development is *πατέρων μέγ' ἀμείνονες εὐχόμεθ' εἶναι*—'We are much wiser men than our fathers.' Well, surely, in many respects that is the case. Why, then, may not Protestants claim a right to revise erroneous decisions made in days when learning was asleep and science did not exist? Submission to the supremacy of Rome in Europe was mainly brought about by the circulation of documents which no one now pretends to be genuine. Why should not an age learned enough to detect these forgeries reject also the doctrine which was founded on them? Or, take another Roman doctrine, that of Transubstantiation. It was built up in the middle ages, and founded on a scholastic theory of substance and accidents which

modern philosophy rejects. Why is the building to remain, when its foundation is discovered to be rotten? So much for the doctrine of Development in Protestant hands; while, in infidel, it leads to the improving away of religion altogether. We, being wiser men than our fathers, can dispense with superstitions that amused them.

And against Protestants, at least, Romanists gain nothing by appealing to God's promises to be ever with His Church, and to give His Spirit to guide it into truth, and thence inferring that such as His Church is, such her Founder intended it to become. But this principle, 'Whatever is is right,' has to encounter the difficulty that Protestantism *is*: Why should not it be right? Was it only in Rome that Christianity was to develop itself? Was it not also to do so in Germany and England? Has God's Holy Spirit only a local operation, and is it to be supposed that He had no influence in bringing about the form in which Christ's religion has shaped itself here? May it not be supposed, for example, that He wisely ordained that the constitution of His Church should receive modifications to adapt it to the changing exigencies of society; that, in times when no form of government but monarchy was to be seen anywhere, it was necessary, if His Church was to make head successfully against the prevalent reign of brute force, that all its powers should be concentrated in a single hand; but that when, with the general spread of knowledge, men refused to give unreasoning submission to authority, and claimed the right to exercise some judgment of their own in the conduct of their affairs, the constitution of the Church needed to be altered in order to bring it into harmony with the political structure of modern society?

The fact is, that the doctrine of Development has to encounter a great historical difficulty, which it can only remove by an enormous assumption. The doctrine is, that Christ's original revelation contained seeds and germs of truths destined, under the Divine guidance, to expand to a certain definite form. If this be true, that expansion would take place wherever these germs were planted. It does not

depend on where a tree is planted, whether it springs up a cedar or a bramble-bush, or whether it brings forth figs or grapes. How is it, then, that all over the East that doctrine which is the cardinal one of modern Romanism—the necessity of union with the Chair of Peter—never made its appearance; nay, that the direct opposite was held? And what reason can be given for excluding from the list of divinely-intended developments those which we Protestants have made—as, for instance, the importance which we attach to the exercise of private judgment, to the individual study of Holy Scripture, to the right of each to approach the Throne of Grace without any human mediator? May it not be said that it was the vitality which the teaching of the Holy Spirit gave to the last doctrine, which has rescued Christianity from assuming the form of some heathen superstitions, in which a certain caste of men was imagined to understand the art of conciliating the favour of the gods; to whose mediation, therefore, the ordinary worshipper was to address himself, religion being a matter which only his priests understood, and which required no intellectual co-operation of his own?

If we compare Protestant with Roman Catholic developments, we find, further, that Protestant developments are of such a nature as to be made only in the fulness of time, as the human intellect developed itself, and as science and learning grew. There is no shame in a Church acknowledging herself to grow wiser with years, in such matters as these. If the Church of Rome, for instance, were now wise enough to expel the text of the Three heavenly Witnesses from her Vulgate, she could say in her defence that the science of Biblical criticism was more advanced now than in the days when this text was admitted. But, by what means are we to suppose that the Roman Church acquired a knowledge of historical facts concerning which there is no historical tradition? How has she come to be wiser now than the Church of former ages, concerning the way in which the Blessed Virgin was conceived 1900 years ago, or concerning the removal of her body to heaven? If there had been any historical tradition on these subjects, the Church would always

have known it. And is it likely that God has interfered to make any special revelation on these subjects now, if He saw there was no inconvenience in leaving His Church for so many centuries without authentic information on such points?

However, without further arguing the point whether Protestant or Roman developments are the best, it is evident that the doctrine of Development is a many-edged weapon. There are Eastern developments and Western ones, Protestant and Romish, even infidel developments: which is the right one? The Romanist answers, The Church of Rome is infallible; she alone has been commissioned to develop doctrine the right way; all other developments are wrong. Let the Romanist prove that, and he may use the doctrine of Development, if he then cares to do so; but it is quite plain that without the doctrine of Roman Infallibility, the doctrine of Development is perfectly useless to a Romish advocate.

But with the doctrine of Infallibility once proved, or supposed to be so, the doctrine of Development becomes needless; and Cardinal Manning, in particular, has quite got beyond it. In my own time the aspect of Romanism has changed so rapidly that this theory of Development, so fashionable thirty years ago, has now dropped into the background. It was wanted while the Roman Catholic divines were attempting to make some kind of battle on the field of history. In those days it was still attempted to be maintained that the teaching of the Church of the present day agrees with that of the Church of early times: not indeed in form, but at least in suchwise that the former contains the germ of the latter. Now, the idea of testing the teaching of the Church of the present day, by comparison either with Scripture or antiquity, is completely abandoned. Cardinal Manning has profited by Plutarch's story, that when Pericles was puzzling himself what account of his expenditure he should give the Athenian people, he got the advice from Alcibiades that it would be wiser of him to study how he could avoid giving any account at all. The most thoroughgoing and most ignorant

Protestant cannot show greater indifference to the opinions of the Fathers than does Cardinal Manning. If Dr. Manning were asked whether St. Cyprian held the doctrine of the Pope's Supremacy, he might answer much in the same way that, as the story goes, Mr. Spurgeon answered, when asked whether St. Cyprian held the doctrine of Justification by Faith. Either might say, 'I don't know, and I don't much care; but, for his own sake, I hope he did; for if he didn't, so much the worse for him.' According to Manning, it is a matter of unimportance *how* the Church is to be reconciled with Scripture or antiquity, when once you understand that the Church is the living voice of the same Being who inspired Scripture, and who taught the ancient Church. To look for one's creed in Scripture and antiquity is, to Manning, as great a heresy as to look for it in Scripture alone. Either course makes the individual the judge or critic of Revelation. The appeal to antiquity, says Manning, is both a treason and a heresy. It is a treason, because it rejects the Divine voice of the Church *at this hour;* and a heresy, because it denies that voice to be divine.* According to Manning's theory, it is our duty to accept implicitly whatever the *present* Church teaches, and to be sure that, however opposed this may seem to what we find in Scripture or antiquity, we need not trouble ourselves about the matter, and that the opposition can only be apparent. According to this theory, then, all the prerogatives of Scripture are annulled: the dicta of Pius IX. and Leo XIII. are as truly inspired by God's Spirit, and are to be received with as much reverence, as the utterances of Peter and Paul. Thus the function of the Church, in the latest form of Romanism, is made to be not so much to guard and hand down securely an original revelation as to be a perpetual organ for making new revelations. Whenever a new controversy arises, the Pope is divinely inspired to discern its true solution, and to pronounce which of the parties is in the right, and how far. In this way Manning's party have now got beyond the old Ultramontane doctrine of the

* *Temporal Mission of the Holy Ghost*, p. 226: see also pp. 28, 203.

inerrancy of the Pope. This doctrine has been changed into that of his divine perpetual inspiration, giving him a power of disclosing new truths as infallibly as Peter and Paul. Dr. Pusey called this theory a kind of Llamaism, implying, as it does, a kind of hypostatic union of the Holy Ghost with each successive Pope.

I think I have made good my assertion, that the present Roman Catholic position is one taken up in desperation by men who have been driven from every other. And I will add that they have taken it up with immense loss; for the few whom they have gained from us do not make up for the larger numbers, both in our communion and their own, whom they have driven into infidelity. In their assaults on Protestantism they have freely made use of infidel arguments. Their method has been that of some so-called Professors of biology: first to bewilder and stupefy their patients, that they may be ready to believe anything, and do anything, their mesmerizer tells them. And it has happened that men who have been thus driven to the verge of infidelity, when they saw that abyss yawning before them, have eagerly clutched at the only hand which they believed had power to save them from it. But for one convert made in this way, many have been spoiled in the making; many, when offered the choice—Ultramontanism or Infidelity—have taken the latter alternative. It is a very short way from the doctrine that Pius IX. and Leo XIII. were as much inspired as Peter and Paul, to the doctrine that Peter and Paul were no more inspired than Pius or Leo.

According to the theory of our Church, the appearance of Christ, and the founding of His Church, of which He made the Apostles the first earthly heads, were unique events in the world's history. No argument can be drawn from the uniformity of nature against the possibility that miracles may have attended these events, because the uniformity of nature only assures us that in like circumstances like results will take place; and here the circumstances are asserted to be wholly unlike what has occurred at any other time. But the case is otherwise if it is implicitly denied that there was

anything exceptional in the mission of the Apostles. If their divine commission was the same in kind as that which the Pope enjoys now, we must measure what is told of them by what our experience tells us of the Pope now. And, conversely, if we believe that they really did authenticate the message which they delivered, by exhibitions of miraculous power, we have a right to demand that the Pope, if he claims to be the organ of divine revelations, as they were, should heal the sick, and raise the dead, as they did.

It would be too late to-day to commence the discussion of the question of the Infallibility of the Church. I content myself for to-day with having shown that this is, in fact, the pivot of the whole controversy, on which everything turns, defeat on which would make all other victories useless; and, conversely, that a man who ceases to hold it ceases to be really a Roman Catholic.

In conclusion, I have to warn you that, although the reasons I have given justify me in devoting this Term's Lectures to the question of Infallibility, to the exclusion of several important subjects, yet you cannot safely neglect these other subjects; for, though the controversy has been simplified for the Roman Catholic, it is not so for you. The Romish champions, beaten out of the open field, have shut themselves up in this fortress of Infallibility, where, as long as their citadel remains untaken, they can defy all assaults. Confute them by any arguments you please, and they can still reply, 'The Church has said otherwise,' and there is an end of the matter. But, though the Roman Catholic has thus shut himself up in a fortress, he can at any moment sally out on you, if he thinks he can do it with success. He will for the moment waive the question whether the Pope *could* decide wrongly, and will undertake to show that decisions of his which had been controverted were, in point of fact, right. Every victory a Roman Catholic can gain over you on particular points of controversy strengthens his faith in the attribute of Infallibility, his Church's claim to which seems to be verified by fact. On the other hand, if he is beaten back into his fortress every sally he makes, if he

finds it a task of ever-increasing difficulty to reconcile with Scripture and with history the actual decisions of this guide who is warranted never to go wrong, so heavy a strain is put on his faith in the reality of this gift, that this faith is not unlikely to give way. The almost invariable history of conversions or re-conversions from Romanism is that doubt has arisen as to the truth of some particular point of Roman Catholic doctrine (very often not by any means the most important point), and then, as the evidence of the falsity of this particular doctrine becomes more and more clear, the inquirer goes on to examine whether the arguments for Infallibility are strong enough to bear the strain laid on them. In fact, a tract on any point of Roman teaching may be regarded as an argument on the question of Infallibility. Clearly, there could be no more decisive proof that the Church of Rome *can* err, than if you could show that she *has* erred. If a Roman Catholic will discuss any point of doctrine with you, he is really putting the Infallibility of his Church on its trial. And, consequently, a thoroughgoing Infallibilist, like Manning, is consistently a foe to all candid historical investigation, as being really irreconcileable with faith in the Church's authority.

III.

THE ARGUMENT IN A CIRCLE.

ON the last day I dwelt sufficiently on the vital importance in the Roman Catholic controversy of the question of the Infallibility of the Church. To-day it is our business to examine what proof of that doctrine can be offered. But there is a preliminary question whether it is in the nature of things possible that any proof *can* be given.

The craving for an infallible guide arises from men's consciousness of the weakness of their understanding. In temporal matters we are constrained to act on our own judgment. When we have important decisions to make, we often feel ourselves in great doubt and perplexity, and sometimes the decision we ultimately make turns out to be wrong, and we have to pay the penalty in loss or other suffering. A loss, however, affecting only our temporal interests may be borne; but it seems intolerable to men that, when their eternal interests are at stake, any doubt or uncertainty should attend their decisions, and they look out for some guide who may be able to tell them, with infallible certainty, which is the right way. And yet it is easy to show that it is in the nature of things impossible to give men absolute security against error in any other way than by their being themselves made infallible; and I shall hereafter show you that when men profess faith in the Church's infallibility, they are, in real truth, professing faith in their own.

It is common with Roman Catholics to speak as if the use of private judgment and the infallibility of the Church were things opposed to each other. They are fond of contrasting the peace, and certainty, and assurance of him whose

faith rests on the rock of an infallible Church, with the uncertainty of him whose belief rests only on the shifting sands of his own fallible judgment. But it must be remembered that our belief *must*, in the end, rest on an act of our own judgment, and can never attain any higher certainty than whatever that may be able to give us. We may talk about the right of private judgment, or the duty of private judgment, but a more important thing to insist on is the *necessity* of private judgment. We have the choice whether we shall exercise our private judgment in one act or in a great many; but exercise it in one way or another we must. We may either apply our private judgment separately to the different questions in controversy—Purgatory, Transubstantiation, Invocation of Saints, and so forth—and come to our own conclusion on each; or we may apply our private judgment to the question whether the Church of Rome is infallible, and, if we decide that it is, take all our religious opinions thenceforward on trust from her. But it is clear that our certainty that any of the things she teaches us is right cannot be greater than whatever certainty we have that our private judgment has decided the question rightly whether we ought to submit unreservedly to her teaching; and it will appear, before we have done, that this is at least as difficult a question as any in the controversy.

That submission to the Church of Rome rests ultimately on an act of private judgment is unmistakeably evident, when a Romanist tries (as he has no scruple in doing) to make a convert of you or any other member of our Church. What does he then ask you to do but to decide that the religion of your fathers is wrong; that the teachers and instructors of your childhood were all wrong; that the clergy to whom you have looked up as best able to guide you are all mistaken, and have been leading you in a way which must end in your eternal destruction? Well, if you come to the conclusion to reject all the authority which you have reverenced from your childhood, is not that a most audacious exercise of private judgment? But suppose you come to the opposite conclusion, and decide on staying where you were, would not a

Romanist have a right to laugh at you, if you said that you were not using your private judgment *then ;* that to *change* one's religion indeed is an act of private judgment, but that one who continues in his father's religion is subject to none of the risks to which every exercise of private judgment is liable? Well, it is absurd to imagine that logic has one rule for Roman Catholics and another for us ; that it would be an exercise of private judgment in them to change their religion, but none if they continue in what their religious teachers have told them. An act of our judgment must be the ultimate foundation of all our beliefs.

The case is the same as if an inexperienced woman now finds herself the inheritor of a landed estate. She may feel herself quite incompetent to decide on all the questions of dealing with tenants that must now arise, and she may very wisely entrust the management of her affairs to an agent or attorney. But it would be a delusion to imagine that she thereby escapes risk or responsibility. She has to exercise her judgment in the choice of an agent, and according as she has made that decision wisely or not, her affairs prosper, or the reverse. A blind man does well in getting someone to lead him ; but if he chooses a blind man to lead him, both fall into the ditch. And so in matters of religion. The most irreligious man, who resolves to neglect the whole subject, and never trouble his head about any religious question, surely by that resolve, whether formally or informally made, incurs a most serious responsibility. In like manner, neither does the man escape responsibility who equally puts the consideration of religious problems from his mind, because he is content to surrender his judgment to the guidance of someone else whom he believes to be wiser than himself. I do not see how a Roman Catholic advocate can help yielding the point that a member of his Church does, in truth, exercise private judgment, once for all, in his decision to submit to the teaching of the Church.

But he might probably argue that the illustration I have used shows that this is the very wisest way to exercise private judgment. The lady of my illustration surely does the

wisest thing, if she attempts no other way of dealing with her estate, than, after taking the best advice she can get, entrusting herself to a good agent. Do we not in every department of conduct submit our own judgment to that of skilled persons? If we are sick, or if a member of our family is so, we do not try to study the case out of medical books; we call in a physician of repute, and submit implicitly to his directions. If we go to sea, we leave the navigation of the vessel in the hands of the captain. If we have a difficult lawsuit, we do not try to conduct it ourselves; we take legal advice, and permit our adviser to determine our course of action. Why should we think that the problems of religion are so simple, that skilled and unskilled persons are on a par, and that this is the only subject in the world in which a man is to be ashamed to submit his judgment to that of those who are wiser than himself?

This is by no means an uncommon line of argument for a Roman Catholic advocate to use; but if he does, it shows that he does not at all understand the nature of the claim to infallibility made on behalf of his Church, of which claim this argument is, in real truth, entirely subversive. For it would be absurd misrepresentation to suggest that any of us who insists on the necessity of private judgment thinks it a matter of indifference whether a man uses his judgment rightly. On the contrary, we think it every man's duty, who has to make a decision, to use every means in his power to guide his judgment rightly. Not the least of these means is the instruction and advice of people better informed than ourselves. I do not suppose that any different rule in this respect prevails in matters of religion and in other matters; or that theology is the only science in the world that can be known by the light of nature, and in which a man, who has given no thought to the subject, stands on a level with one who has. The illustrations we have used, then, justify a clergyman in claiming deference for his opinion on theological subjects from a layman, just so far, and no more, as he has given more and more prayerful study to those subjects than the layman has. It is just so in other cases.

Why do we defer to the opinion of a barrister in matters of law, and to that of a physician in questions of medicine? Not because of their official position, but because of their superior acquaintance with the subject. We do not imagine that an idle young man, who has eaten his dinners, and got called to the Bar, becomes, by reason of his new dignity, qualified to conduct an important lawsuit, or that we may not, without breach of modesty, prefer our own interpretation of an Act of Parliament to his. And so if you give no heed to theological study, the mere fact of your ordination will not entitle you to claim deference for your opinion from members of your congregation, among whom you may easily find some better informed than yourself.

On what grounds, then, do those who insist on the infallibility of the Church of Rome claim deference for the authority of the Pope? Is it on the ground on which the illustrations we have used show that deference may rightly be claimed, namely, that superior knowledge which is the natural result of greater learning and deeper study? Clearly no such thing. The deference claimed is alleged to be due to the Pope's official position solely, and is demanded from the most learned and the most ignorant of his subjects equally. Now, on the principle that a man is likely to know more of a subject the more he has studied it, which of the two had a right to claim that his judgment deserved to be received with respect—von Döllinger, when he said that the doctrine of the Pope's personal infallibility was a mere novelty, unknown to the Church of former times; or Pius IX., when he declared that the Church had always held it? The one might be considered as entitled to speak on Church history with the authority of an expert; the other was an Italian ecclesiastic, of no reputation for learning, to whose opinion, on a question of Church history, if it were not for his official position, no one would dream of paying the slightest attention. You see, then, that the illustrations which have been appealed to are utterly destructive of the Papal claims. In truth, the ultra-Protestants and the ultra-Papists are in complete agreement in their contempt for

theological and ecclesiastical learning, and in their resistance to that claim to deference for the opinion of the clergy, which is made precisely so far, and no more, as by diligent and prayerful study the clergy have learned to know more than those who are asked to defer to them. In the Roman Catholic Church, as much as in the wildest Protestant sect, learning must give way to ignorance and prejudice. Let a theological opinion commend itself to the superstitious and ignorant of the people; let the practices founded on it become prevalent; then let the Pope, who may be quite as superstitious and ignorant himself, give formal expression to it, and the learned have only the humiliating choice whether they will be turned out like von Döllinger, or give an amazed and reluctant assent, like Cardinal Newman.

I must not part with this illustration without pointing out that the kind of deference to his authority which the most learned divine may claim is of a different nature from that which the captain of a ship may demand from his passengers, or a physician from his patients. The passengers do not go into a ship to learn navigation, but to be carried to their journey's end the quickest way: a physician's patients want to be cured of their disease, and not to be taught medical science. If in the Christian, as in many heathen systems, the art of propitiating the divinities was a special craft known to the priesthood alone, then the analogy would subsist, and we ought to trouble ourselves no more about the secrets of the art by which the priesthood gain for us the Divine favour, than a passenger on shipboard troubles himself about lunar observations and the nautical almanac. But the promise to Christ's Church was, '*All* thy people shall be taught of God.' In the Christian system religious knowledge is not the secret of one profession, but the privilege and the duty of all the people; and the duty of the clergy is to *teach* those committed to their care. It follows at once that the relation between them and their flocks is not that between a physician and his patients, but rather that between the physician and the class of students to whom he is teaching medical science. From the members of such a class he *is*

entitled to the deference to which his superior knowledge gives him a right. His students would make no progress if they were indocile to their instructor, if they were captious and conceited; full of the belief that they had already knowledge enough, and that the old woman's remedies which their grandmothers or aunts had taught them could not be improved on by the highest medical science. And yet the instructor must be a bad one, or his pupils of mean capacity, if they do not arrive at a point when their beliefs rest on a better foundation than their teacher's word; when they are able to verify for themselves the things which they at first accepted from him with meekness and docility; when they feel that they may, without breach of modesty, criticize what he has told them, and perhaps improve on it.

I have thought it important, when speaking about private judgment, to make it plain that we do not recommend rash judgment, or independence of the teaching of others, or exclude deference to the authority of persons better informed than ourselves, or the use of any of the means which prudent persons employ in order to guide their judgment rightly.

But I must bring you back to the point with which I commenced, namely, that it is absurd for Roman Catholics to disparage private judgment, or make light of the kind of certainty we can obtain by its means, since their belief, as well as ours, must ultimately rest on an act of their private judgment, and can have no higher certainty than whatever that is capable of yielding. If they use their private judgment on no other question, they must use it on the question, Are we bound to submit implicitly to the authority of the Church of Rome? The result is, that absolute certainty can only be had on the terms of being infallible one's self. A man may say, 'I am absolutely certain that I am right in my religious opinions, because I believe what the Pope believes, and he is absolutely certain not to believe wrong.' But then comes the question, 'How come you to be absolutely certain that the Pope is absolutely certain not to believe wrong?'

It is not possible to answer this question without being guilty of the logical fallacy of arguing in a circle. For ex-

ample, a common way of answering is by producing texts of Scripture such as 'Thou art Peter, and on this rock I will build my Church,' and such like. Now before we can use these texts to prove the Church's infallibility, private judgment must decide that the books cited are the Word of God, and private judgment must interpret the texts brought forward; and if private judgment can be trusted to do this, it would seem that it might be trusted to decide other questions too. But there is no point on which Roman advocates are fonder of insisting than that it is from the Church that we receive the Bible; that without her guidance we could have no certainty about the canon of Scripture; and still more, that without the Church's guidance we are incompetent to find the true meaning of Scripture. Now, certainly, those texts which are alleged to prove the Church's infallibility are not so plain and clear that no rational man can doubt their meaning. On the contrary, there are no texts in the Sacred Volume about which controversy has raged more fiercely. I suppose there is no text on which the Fathers have given greater variety of interpretation than that which I just mentioned, 'Thou art Peter': and we have to go down far, indeed, before we find one who discovered the Bishop of Rome in it. As a matter of fact, it is certain that more than half of those who profess to acknowledge the authority of the Bible are unable to find in it any proof of Roman infallibility. It remains, then, for a Roman Catholic to say, 'I know that I understand these texts rightly, because the Church, which cannot err, has taught me that this is their true meaning,' and then they are clearly in a vicious circle. They say, 'The Church is infallible, because the Scriptures testify that she is so, and the Scriptures testify this because the Church infallibly declares that such is their meaning.'

We find ourselves in the same circle if we try to prove the Church's infallibility by antiquity, sayings of the Fathers, by reason, or in any other way. For the advocates of the Church of Rome have constantly maintained that, on religious questions, nothing but the Church's authority can give us certainty. Well, when we are trying to prove the Church's

authority, we shall be guilty of a logical fallacy if we assume the thing to be proved. Unless, then, we are building a fabric in the air, our proof of the Church's infallibility must rest on something else; and if we arrive at a certain result, it follows that *without* the Church's help it is possible for us to arrive at not only true, but absolutely certain, results in our investigation of one of the most difficult of religious questions. All the attempts of Roman Catholic controversialists to show the helplessness of men without the Church make it impossible to have any confidence in their success in finding the Church.

Great efforts have been made by Roman Catholic divines to clear their mode of procedure from the charge of logical fallacy, but in the nature of things such efforts *must* be hopeless. A clever mathematician described the problem of perpetual motion, about which so many crazy speculators have busied themselves, as the problem to enable a man to lift himself from the ground by the waistband of his own breeches. And this is precisely the kind of problem which men set themselves when they hope to discover some absolute security against the possibility of going wrong in their judgments. Unless God directly bestows miraculously this privilege on themselves, they must be exposed to risk of error in their judgment that somebody else possesses this privilege. In point of fact, I believe that in the Roman Church, whenever faith in her is more than that indolent uninquiring assent which men give to the opinions in which they were brought up, and which it has not occurred to them to doubt, it rests on an implied persuasion that God has miraculously bestowed on them the privilege of knowing that the Church is infallible. Whether such a persuasion is an adequate foundation of faith will be considered afterwards, when I come to discuss the value of faith resting on a supposed motion of God's Spirit communicated to the individual.

Since this lecture was delivered, a Roman Catholic bishop (Clifford) has attempted, in an article in the *Fortnightly Review* (January, 1887), to meet the difficulty here raised. The statement which he professes to answer is: 'The Church

bases its authority on the remarkable words, "Thou art Peter," &c. The authority of the words, "Thou art Peter," rests on the Divine authority of the New Testament. But the authority of the New Testament, in turn, rests on the authority of the Church, which derives its authority from the book. . . . We call this process, in other matters, arguing in a circle.' Bishop Clifford replies: The argument here set forth is an argument in a circle, no doubt; but it is not the line of argument which the Church adopts in proving against unbelievers her Divine origin and mission. He then proceeds to state the latter line of argument in a form, of which what follows is a summary:—

(*a*) She appeals, in the first instance, to the writings of the New Testament, using them, not as inspired books, but as the genuine works of contemporary writers, in the same way as she appeals to Tacitus, Seneca, or other trustworthy authorities. In this way it is established, by purely historical evidence, that there was such a person as Christ; that He founded a Society, which received the names of the Christian and the Catholic Church; that that Society has continued to exist through successive generations to the present day, and that the Church is that Society.

(*b*) Still using the New Testament writings only as historical records, she establishes the fact of the miracles of Christ, and especially the fact of the Resurrection. Thence she infers that Christ is God. In confirmation of His Divinity, and of the truth of His mission, she appeals to the manner in which His prophecies concerning the Church and the Jewish nation have been fulfilled; to the wonderful spread of the Gospel; to the constancy of the martyrs; to the great change for good that the preaching of the Gospel has wrought among men; and to the testimony which the Church herself has borne, through so many generations, to the belief which has been held in the truth of His miracles.

(*c*) Christ having been proved to be God, His words must be Divine, and therefore infallibly true. But it is on record that He spoke the words, 'Thou art Peter,' &c.; 'As the Father has sent me, I also send you' (John xx. 21); 'Going,

teach all nations: . . . behold, I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world' (Matt. xxviii. 19, 20). These being God's words, the Church, to which they relate, is a Divine institution, and has authority from God.

(*d*) This Church, founded by God, with a mission from God to teach all nations, and armed with a Divine promise that God will be with her to the consummation of the world, cannot err in her teaching; she is, by God's appointment, infallible.

Such, in substance, is Bishop Clifford's reply; but, in offering it, he wholly misconceives the exigencies of his position. He brings out the infallibility of the Church as the result of a long line of argument. This doctrine, which is wanted for the foundation of the building, is with him the coping-stone of the structure; or, to state the matter more correctly, it is the last storey of a house of cards. For the whole argument is full of disputable points. Thus, in the last clause of paragraph (*a*), 'and the Church is that society,' he, no doubt, by 'the Church' means the Church of Rome, to the exclusion, for example, of the Anglican Church and of the Eastern; but it need not be said what room for controversy there is on that point. In paragraph (*d*) there is a tremendous jump in the assumption that to prove the Divine institution of the Church is enough to prove its infallibility. For with regard to the State, we are told 'the powers that be are ordained of God,' yet it does not follow that 'the powers that be' can never issue unjust commands.

But this is not the time to examine the goodness of Bishop Clifford's arguments; that will come under discussion at a later stage: what we are now concerned with is whether such a proof as is here offered us makes any pretence of being adequate to the necessities of the case. What is wanted is a proof which will induce us to accept without doubting the teaching of the Church. Now, you cannot submit without doubting to a doubtful authority. It would be ridiculous, for instance, to say, You must accept without the least doubt the assertions of the Church of Rome, because it is an even chance that she may be infallible. What degree

of assurance, then, is such an argument as Bishop Clifford's calculated to afford? You cannot have more assurance of the truth of the conclusion of a long line of argument than whatever assurance you have of the truth of every premiss, and of the correctness of every inference, used in the argument. If doubt attaches to any one step in the argument, that doubt will attach to the conclusion: if doubt attaches to more steps than one, the conclusion is affected by multiplied doubt.

Now, Bishop Clifford cannot possibly imagine that the steps of his argument are free from doubt. The line of argument is, in its general features, the same as that employed by Protestants, which Roman Catholic advocates are fond of saying is not sufficient to warrant certainty of belief without the testimony of an infallible Church. But if Bishop Clifford's account of the matter is right, Protestants have ten times as much certainty as Roman Catholics. For the arguments by which the former establish their faith are accepted as good and valid by the latter, to the foundation of whose system they are indispensable. But the arguments necessary to establish the points in the system of Roman Catholics which are peculiar to them, are such that nobody but themselves can see any cogency in them.

Bishop Clifford was probably aware of the weakness of the proof he offers; for he is careful to say that this is only the line of argument which the Church offers to unbelievers. But Logic has not one rule for believers, another for unbelievers. If the proof which the Church tenders to unbelievers is not satisfactory, she does not mend matters by saying, Oh, you will be fully satisfied if you will only take my word for everything. This is much the same as if one, seeking a place with you as a servant, brought you a recommendation which you did not think satisfactory, and then thought to make it all right by writing his own name on the back of it. However, I remember that this line of defence was taken up long ago by Dr. Newman, and I believe it is as plausible as any that can be adopted. He frankly owned the impossibility of making out any proof of her claims which will be

felt as demonstratively convincing by one who has not already submitted to her. He taught that one must not expect certainty in the highest sense before conversion. 'Faith must make a venture, and is rewarded by sight.'* The claims of the Church shine, as it were, by their own light. She comes and calls on you, in the name of God, to bow down before her. And though, perhaps, you can give no reason logically unassailable for submitting to her, yet, after you have submitted, you find that you have done well. You find in her bosom rest, peace, freedom from doubt; and you are sure that she who has bestowed these gifts upon you must be divine.

Now, assuredly we do not deny that an alleged revelation may powerfully commend itself by internal evidence. He who has received such a revelation on its external proofs may find additional reason for trusting it in the consistency of its doctrines with each other, their reasonableness, their holiness, their adaptation to the wants of his nature. Such arguments as these go to make up great part of the grounds of the conviction we all feel that the Bible comes from God. But this rational conviction can be felt by no member of a Church claiming to be infallible. For her first principle is, that her teaching shall be subjected to no criticism. A disciple of the Church of Rome is bound to crush down every doubt as sinful—must reject every attempt to test the teaching of his Church by reason or Scripture or antiquity. Consequently, her teaching can never receive any subsequent verification. The certainty of her disciples can never rise higher than it was the first moment they submitted to her. The pretence of subsequent verification really presents us with a *petitio principii* in the most outrageous form. 'You must believe everything I say,' demands the Pope. 'Why should we?' we inquire. 'Well, perhaps I cannot give any quite convincing reason; but just try it. If you trust me with doubt or hesitation, I make no promise; but if you really believe everything I say, you will find,—that you *will* believe everything I say.' It follows, then, that all the Church

* See *Loss and Gain*, pp. 284, 318.

of Rome can promise is what any guide can promise who insists on blindfolding his passengers. 'Trust yourselves implicitly to me, and you shall thenceforward feel no doubt or perplexity; you shall never *see* any reason to make you think that I am leading you wrong. Whatever may be the difficulties or dangers in the path, you shall never perceive any of them.' It requires no Divine commission to be able to promise freedom from doubt on such terms as these. I could promise as much to any of you. I could tell you all: 'If you never use your understanding, it will never lead you wrong. If you never inquire, you will never be perplexed. If you take all your opinions on trust from others, you will be free from all the painful uncertainty that attends the task of forming opinions for yourselves.' No; if you wish to make sure that the Church of Rome is a trustworthy guide, you must examine her claims before you submit to her. For, as her present rulers teach, he who once puts himself under her guidance abandons all means of verification of her doctrines, and has no power of detecting error, should any exist.

This argument of Dr. Newman's was revived some little time ago by Mr. Mallock. He had been in the habit of publishing articles in magazines, in which he criticized other people's beliefs and disbeliefs so freely, that it was hard to know what he believed or did not believe himself. At last he published an essay, of which the gist was that Romanism alone could make head against infidelity; that all attempts to defend Christianity by argument must end in failure; but that a religion which demands submission without proof may hold its ground for ever. For a time, I grant; but certainly only for a time. Was ever the cause of Christianity so treacherously defended? If infamous charges were made against my character, perhaps there are some of you who might think well enough of me to disbelieve them without examination. But suppose anyone were to defend me after this fashion: 'Dr. Salmon says he is a good man, and I earnestly pray you to take his own word for it; for if you permit yourself to inquire into the charges against him, you will be forced to come to an unfavourable conclusion about

him, which would be so very uncomfortable for you to hold, that it will be a great deal wiser for you to make no inquiry.' Do you think I should be grateful for such a defence as that? or that I could regard the maker of it as other than an enemy who scarcely took the trouble to disguise his malignity? If this be the best that can be said for the Church of Rome, the peace of mind which she offers is just that which might be offered by the directors of some Glasgow Bank, who had made away with their customers' money, but hoped that by bold speaking they might carry on their business prosperously, and prevent their accounts being looked into.

Recently an attempt has been made to place the system of Roman Catholic belief on a more scientific foundation. Of this I shall speak in the next lecture.

IV.

THE GRAMMAR OF ASSENT.

BEFORE coming to the immediate subject of this lecture, I find it convenient to mention a very interesting book, published several years ago by Mr. Capes, one of those who went over to Rome about the same time as Dr. Newman, but who, unlike him, did not submit to having his eyes quite blindfolded, and consequently saw reason to distrust the guide whom he had chosen, and therefore returned to the Church of England. His reasons were given in the book of which I speak. In this he tells* that he had been about five years a Roman Catholic before he fully understood the nature of the claim made by members of that communion. About that time he was taken to task by one of the leading divines in that Church for having spoken of the certainty which they had of the truths of their religion, as in its nature moral, not absolute; that is to say, as amounting to a very high kind of probability, and nothing more. He was informed that a Catholic possesses absolute certainty as to the truths of revealed religion, which are taught him by an infallible Church, in whose statements he believes with an undoubting faith, which faith is the supernatural gift of God. His knowledge, then, of the supernatural truths of Christianity is alleged to be absolute, and to admit of neither criticism nor doubt. In the next lecture I mean to say something about the theory of the supernatural gift of faith as laid down at the Vatican Council, merely remarking now that the theory of a supernatural endowment superseding in matters of religion the

* *Reasons for Returning to the Church of England*: 2nd edition, 1871, p. 56.

ordinary laws of reasoning, an endowment to question the validity of which involves deadly peril, deters Roman Catholics from all straightforward seeking for truth; for they fear lest they should trifle with that supernatural gift by seeking for that which they claim to have already.

Now observe that the evidence which proves the truth of Christianity is in its nature historical, not demonstrative. That Jesus Christ lived more than eighteen centuries ago; that He died, rose again, and taught such and such doctrines, are things proved by the same kind of argument as that by which we know that Augustus was Emperor of Rome, and that there is such a country as China. Whether or not Christ founded a Church; whether He bestowed the gift of infallibility upon it; and whether He fixed the seat of that infallibility at Rome, are things to be proved, if proved at all, by arguments which a logician would class as probable, not demonstrative. It is true that Roman Catholics maintain that when a Divine revelation has been given, our assent is not a matter of opinion, but of certainty. We must receive without doubt what God has revealed. In a popular lecture, there is room for abundant declamation on the topic that whatever God has revealed must be absolutely true. It is a common rhetorical artifice with a man who has to commend a false conclusion deduced from a syllogism, of which one premiss is true, and the other false, to spend an immensity of time in proving the premiss which nobody denies. If he devotes a sufficient amount of argument and declamation to this topic, the chances are that his hearers will never ask for the proof of the other premiss. Thus it is really amusing in Roman Catholic popular books of controversial teaching to see how much labour is expended on the proof that God is true; that He cannot deceive; that nothing which He has revealed can be false; and that therefore those who accept His statements without doubting cannot possibly be in error, and have infallible certainty that they are in the right. But all the time it is tried to make us forget to ask for proof of what is the real point at issue, namely, that God *has* revealed the doctrines which their Church teaches. It is certain enough

that what God has revealed is true; but if it is not certain that He has revealed the infallibility of the Roman Church, then we cannot have certain assurance of the truth of that doctrine, or of anything that is founded on it.

But it is unavoidable that the proofs that God has revealed the infallibility of the Church should be, in their nature, historical; that is to say, probable, not demonstrative. The great crux, then, with Roman Catholic divines is to explain how, from probable premisses, we arrive at absolutely certain conclusions; how we can have a stronger assurance of what the infallible Church teaches than we can have of the fact of her infallibility.

Dr. Newman had the merit of seeing more clearly than other champions of his Church that a solution of this problem was impossible, if the infallibility of the Church was to be proved by any logical process of reasoning, the necessary law of which is, that we cannot have greater certainty of any conclusion than we have of the premisses from which it is derived. He saw, therefore, that the thing to be done was to remove the process of finding the infallible Church into some province outside logic, in which it shall not be amenable to logical laws. And this is what he tried to do in the last of his works, called an *Essay on the Grammar of Assent.* The professed object of it is, leaving to works on logic the discussion of the theory of Inference to give a theory of the process by which men arrive at their beliefs. Perhaps the chief fault in the book is that Newman has not, even in his own mind, sufficiently distinguished two very different things. He has given a most interesting history of the process by which men actually arrive at beliefs; and he gives this in substitution for the answer to the question, How shall men secure that their beliefs shall be correct?

Perhaps you might suppose that a sound theory of the reasoning process would give a sufficient account of all our correct beliefs. The great merit of Newman's book is, that it brings out very clearly that this is as far as possible from being the case. A moment's reflection will convince you that the majority of our beliefs, true or false, have not been

arrived at by any process of reasoning, but have been handed to us by authority, or caught up from sympathy. In childhood, on the authority of our elders, we accept a mass of beliefs which long govern our practical conduct. As we grow up, experience verifies the soundness of much that we have been taught; some things, however, we examine and reject. But no subsequent reasoning adds anything to the strength of our earlier faith. The belief of him to whom it has never occurred to doubt, though certainly less secure, is commonly stronger than that of him who has doubted, and has by his own investigation verified the correctness of what he had been taught.

So, again, we naturally believe what our neighbours believe, and what commends itself to our feelings. It is the most difficult thing in the world to help believing what all about you believe. There is an interesting account in a book, not so much read now as it was once on a time (*Eothen*), of the process by which a hard-headed Englishman going out to live in the East, and at first laughing at the people's superstition about witchcraft and ghosts, and such like, becomes gradually infected by the beliefs which form the atmosphere in which he lives, and ends by becoming a slave to superstitions he had once despised. How little evidence is necessary to get a popular rumour to be accepted as fact? Take, for example, the generation of panics. With scarcely any ground to justify alarm, a whole army has been seized with apprehension of imminent danger, and in that belief has turned to flight. It requires great training and discipline to make a force proof against such alarms. I need hardly remind you how terribly dangerous it is for anyone to raise a cry of fire in a crowded theatre or concert-room. Often has a whole audience rushed to the doors, trampling each other to death in their eagerness to escape, fully believing in the presence of danger of which there was no evidence whatever. At the time of the Indian mutiny, I remember that stories were current, and were generally believed, of atrocities perpetrated on our countrymen and countrywomen, which we now know to have been gross exaggerations; but at the time to hint a

suspicion of exaggeration would have been regarded as a mark of sympathy with the rebels.

Dr. Newman quarrels with Locke's dictum, that we ought not to entertain any belief with assent greater than is proportioned to the grounds on which it rests. He shows that nobody does carry out this rule in practice; and that Locke himself confesses that there is a number of things not demonstrable, which we hold with as full belief as we give to any proposition in Euclid. It would be mad to doubt that you will one day die; yet the thing is not demonstrably certain. I repeat this from Newman; but I may remark that it is a weakness of his logic that, though quite familiar with the theory of the deductive process, he seems quite unacquainted with the logic of induction. It is more to the point when he says that a man may be content to trust all he has in the world to the faith he has in the truth of his wife, or his friend; he may be most wise in refusing to listen to any question on the matter, yet other people have been deceived in such confidence, and he would be unable to give any logical proof that it was impossible for himself to make a mistake such as theirs.

With this part of Newman's book I have not much to dispute, unless it be the supposition that it gains anything for the Church of Rome. Nay, I found it very useful when an Essay was published a few years ago on *The Ethics of Belief*, by the late Professor Clifford. Clifford, whose great fear came to be lest men should believe too much, tried to make out that it is a highly immoral thing to believe anything the proofs of which we have not fully investigated. Newman's book, if he had read it, might have taught him that what he condemned was really a necessity of our life.

The simple truth is, that as all our action must be guided and stimulated by beliefs of some kind, our Creator has not left us dependent for such beliefs on the slow process of argumentation. Instead of the tedious and laborious process of forming conclusions for ourselves, by weighing arguments *pro* and *con*, we take ready-made the conclusions of others; and it is in this way that the best results one generation is

able to arrive at are handed over as the starting-point for the next. To this is due that the world makes any progress in knowledge, for if each generation had to start afresh, there would be no reason why one should be more successful or wiser than another.

But it is important to remark, that though our beliefs are not, in the first instance, generated by reasoning, they are bound to justify themselves by reason. There is nothing more rational than that children should accept what is taught them by their instructors, even though those instructors may be in error on some points; and generally that, on subjects which we have not leisure or capacity to investigate for ourselves, we should receive the conclusions come to by those who have, and who have the highest reputation for knowledge and ability.

But all this investigation as to the manner in which we get beliefs is seen to be utterly worthless as a basis for the doctrine of Church infallibility, if we observe that though we get beliefs originally, as a general rule, without much personal investigation, every belief has to submit to a constant process of testing and verification, either by ourselves individually, or by general experience; and the confidence we have in traditional belief mainly depends on the constant examination to which it is subjected. Thus you have a general knowledge that the theory of gravitation will account for all the movements of the heavenly bodies. You might count on your fingers the number of persons in the three kingdoms who could say this from their personal knowledge; but you know that if anyone of them discovered any case of failure or exception, it would immediately become a subject of scientific controversy, and we should soon hear of it in every newspaper. How do you know that we are living in an island? You firmly believe that we are, and yet did you ever sail round Ireland yourself? Have you even spoken to anyone who had? The history of your belief is simply that you were told it when you were a child, and have never heard it contradicted since. But what makes your firm belief rational is that you know that if it had not been true, you would be quite

sure to have heard it contradicted. If a single ship had sailed out of Dublin, either to the north or south, and had found its way stopped by land; if a single person had made his way out of Ireland by land, you could not help hearing of it. And so, generally, about geographical propositions of this kind, which are favourite examples with Dr. Newman, we know that the maps published by a number of independent publishers, all substantially agree in the geographical facts which they assert. We know that a multitude of persons are acting every day on the faith that these facts have been correctly stated; and we know that if any one of these persons had found that this faith had misled him, he would have been sure to make his disappointment known. In this way we all feel undoubting certainty about a multitude of geographical facts that it would be quite impossible for us to investigate for ourselves. And *that*, though maps are not absolutely infallible, and though we sometimes hear of navigators making rectification of the charts, sometimes even of shipwrecks caused by too implicit dependence on them.

I have already said that, in claiming the right of private judgment, we acknowledge the need of human teaching to inform our judgment. In particular, we own that the teaching of the Church is God's appointed means for the religious instruction of mankind. But the confidence with which we can trust such teaching is altogether proportionate to its willingness to submit to correction. The teaching of the primitive Church, or of our own, may be as safely trusted as the uncontradicted statements of the newspaper press in a free country, where we know that anything erroneous that may be published is liable to be met by an immediate counter-statement. The teaching of a Church which claims infallibility is as little worthy of confidence as what is published in the newspapers of a despotic country, where nobody is permitted to deny whatever it is the wish of the Government that the people should believe.

A few words will suffice as to a second point on which Dr. Newman lays stress; namely, that we give to things for which the evidence is only probable in its nature as strong a

practical assent as to truths which are actually demonstrated. This is no more than what is laid down in the Introduction to Butler's *Analogy:* probability is the very guide of life. Evidence which a logician would refuse to class as demonstration suffices to give us practical certainty. Even when there is but a strong probability one way, with a small opposing probability the other way, the small probability is, in practice, completely neglected. For instance, when the life of a fellow-creature is at stake (as when a criminal is tried on circumstantial evidence), the judge tells the jury to find him guilty if they have no 'rational doubt' of his guilt; that is to say, that even though one can imagine an explanation of the facts consistent with his innocence, still they are to find him guilty if the probability of this explanation is smaller than that which reasonable men ordinarily allow to influence their conduct. It will presently be part of my own case that it is impossible to draw a sharp line of distinction between things of which we may describe ourselves as practically certain and things which can only be said to be in the highest degree probable.

But what I take to be the specialty of Dr. Newman's book was his imagined discovery of a supposed 'illative sense.' It has already been made evident that logic will not provide any means of freeing us absolutely from risk of error in our religious opinions. If we take our opinions on trust from a guide supposed to be infallible, we are still liable to have erred in the process by which we persuaded ourselves that he is infallible. It would be a 'petitio principii' if we employed the infallible authority in proving his own infallibility: and if we recognize it without his help, we are liable to all the risk of error with which our unassisted religious speculation is said to be attended. Dr. Newman hoped to get over this difficulty by showing that the process of arriving at beliefs was not the work of logic, but of a special sense.

Some persons, he remarks, have an intuitive perception of character, and yet would be unable to assign reasons for the distrust which certain persons inspire in them. A weather-

wise peasant can predict the weather, without being able to give his reasons for saying it will rain to-morrow. Savages have been able to track their way over an unknown country with a sagacity which seems more like instinct than reason. All these sagacious inferences, of which logic seemed unable to give an account, Newman imagined to be the work of a special illative sense, and to this he trusted to give him some higher certainty than reason was capable of yielding, so that he might be rightly as sure that the Pope would not deceive him as a child is that his mother will not deceive him; and might trust the indications which manifest the existence of an infallible Church as safely as a practised physician trusts those by which he makes a diagnosis of a disease, arriving at a right conclusion, which he would not always find easy to justify by argument.

It certainly is true that right conclusions sometimes are arrived at by what looks like a process of divination; but I do not in the least believe that we are entitled to assume a special sense to account for them, or that they are obtained in any other way than as the results of rapid inference from minute facts unnoticed by any but very careful observers. It is no objection to this account of the matter that the parties themselves are unable to explain the steps by which they arrive at their conclusions; for it requires a high state of culture to be able to analyse mental processes. Reasoning came first; logic afterwards. Men reasoned correctly for many generations before Aristotle or anyone else undertook to give an account of the laws which govern all correct inference.

To take Newman's own example, it is true that an experienced physician may be able at a glance to detect the real nature of the disease under which a patient is labouring; but, if he can give no account of his reasons, I should not place him in the first rank of educated physicians; for such a one would be able to teach his class what were the symptoms which had guided his diagnosis. Just in the same way, any of us, meeting a man whom we had never seen before, might be struck by his likeness to a brother or parent

whom we had known, and might yet be quite unable to tell in what the likeness consisted; while a portrait painter, who had made it his business to observe features, might be able not only to detect the likeness, but also to tell in what it consisted. Or, to take another example of the same kind, we all can recognize the handwriting of a friend, and yet might be embarrassed if we had to give evidence on a case of disputed signature in a court of justice. But a few years ago, an interesting book was published by an expert on the handwriting of Junius, showing that those who make the discrimination of handwriting their profession employ no inarticulate process, but reason by arguments of which they are well able to give an account. Once more, take the case of some parts of plays ascribed to Shakespeare, his authorship of which has been disputed. There are parts which some critics, on general considerations of style, had pronounced not to be his, but their grounds of judgment were unappreciable by others of less fine ear or less familiarity with the poet. Recently the metrical peculiarities of these parts have been studied, and have been found to differ from those of Shakespeare's certain works. This is an argument which anyone can test who is able to count. But, no doubt, the metrical peculiarities in question were among the things that were felt by the earlier critics, though they had not so analysed their feelings as to be able to make others understand the grounds of their judgments.

On the whole, I do not think that there is the slightest ground for thinking that we have any special sense to guide us to correct beliefs, though I readily concede that many a man arrives at correct beliefs, not without reasoning, but without being able to state to others the reasons which have influenced his judgment. The sum of the matter is, then, that there is not the smallest pretence for the assertion that the process by which Newman or anyone else arrived at belief in an infallible Church was the business of a special sense, or lies in a province above logic, or is not amenable to the necessary law of reasoning that we have no stronger reason for holding the conclusion than we have for holding the

premisses from which it was obtained. Belief in an infallible Church, when not merely traditional, is the result of a process of reasoning; and, when we come to analyse that process, we shall find it to be a very unsound one. At any rate, if there be any uncertainty about this process, this uncertainty must attach to all its results, and there can be no success in a search for infallibility unless we are infallible ourselves.

Dr. Newman is obliged, in substance, to accept this conclusion, though he objects to the form of expression. To say we are infallible would imply that we were sure of being *always* in the right; but you must own that there are *some* cases in which we may be absolutely certain that we are in the right. Who can refuse to own that there are some things about which we may be perfectly certain? Are you not certain that two and two are four? Are you not certain that Great Britain is an island? that the reigning sovereign is Queen Victoria, and not William the Fourth? Are you not certain that I am now addressing you? And we may be equally certain of the falsity of some other things. Would you condescend to discuss the truth of the heathen fancy that Enceladus lies under Etna, or the notion that Johanna Southcote was a divinely-inspired prophet, or that the Emperor Napoleon had, as he fancied, a star? Why may we not, then, without being infallible, have the same kind of certainty that the Pope is the Vicar of Christ?

Well, we may reasonably ask of the advocates of the Church of Rome that they shall not blow hot and blow cold on the question what kind of certainty is attainable by man's unassisted powers. When they try to prove our need of an infallible guide, they would make you think that, without such help, man's attainment of religious truth is impossible. Now, when the question is whether such a guide has been found, we are told that the answer to this, which is certainly not the easiest of religious problems, can be known as certainly as that two and two are four. If this be so, surely we are safe in asserting our power, without any help from the Church of Rome, to arrive at certain knowledge of all the truths which we hold in common with her. Is not the

evidence for the statement, 'Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners,' quite as clear and convincing as that for the proposition, 'the Pope is Christ's vicar'?

The simple answer to Newman's talk about certainty is got by observing what is the kind of things about which we can have practical certainty. They are the things about which our own judgments agree with those of all other men. The truths which we have the highest confidence in accepting are those which commend themselves as plain and self-evident to everyone else as well as to ourselves. Is the infallibility of the Roman Church a truth of this class? We know, as a matter of fact, that it is not. We need not now determine whether we heretics are right or not. Our very existence proves that, if Christ saw fit to found an infallible Church, He did not see fit to give her unmistakeable credentials. He might, if He had chosen, have made her Divine commission as plain as that the sun is in heaven; but, instead of that, He has left the matter, to say the least, so doubtful, that more than half of those who own Christ as their Lord reject the authority of him who pretends to be the Saviour's mouthpiece; and of those who in name acknowledge that authority, it is safe to say that more than half give only nominal submission. It is safe to say it, because it has been the theme of constant lamentations, in the encyclicals of the late Pope and the present, how his authority is resisted in Italy itself and in other countries professedly Roman Catholic. Cardinal Newman cannot be more certain that the Pope is Christ's vicar than I am that he is not. I do not say it for the purpose of talking big, but state a simple fact, that to my mind this proposition stands on exactly a level with the examples given by Newman, 'that Enceladus lies under Etna, and that Johanna Southcote was inspired,' as a thing that I not only do not believe to be true, but cannot conceive it possible that I should ever be made to believe it to be true. Now, when that is the honest expression of the feelings of a person who has given much study to the subject, and has done his best to be candid, it is absurd to talk as if the proposition were of the same class as that two and two make four.

When I deny the possibility of Roman Catholics having any success in their search for an infallible Church, I hope you will not think that I hold any Pyrrhonic system of sceptical philosophy, or that I disparage the amount of certainty which the human mind is capable of arriving at. It is, in truth, Roman Catholics who get into difficulties from disparaging that homely kind of certainty which suffices to govern our practical decisions in all the most important affairs of life. This seems to them a poor thing, because logicians will only class this practical certainty as high probability, and because it shades off into probability by gradations impossible to be measured. We are certain, for instance, that there was such a man as Julius Cæsar. We may call ourselves certain about the principal events of his life; but when you go into details, and inquire, for instance, what knowledge he had of Catiline's conspiracy, you soon come to questions to which you can give only probable or doubtful answers. And it is just the same as to the facts of Christianity; for ours is a historical religion, and our knowledge of it has to follow the same laws as our knowledge of other history. About the great facts (including all the knowledge of which we count necessary to salvation) we may fairly call ourselves certain. When we descend to details, questions may be proposed, our answers to which can only be said to be probable, and others which we answer with hesitation, or declare ourselves unable to answer at all. This seems to Roman Catholics an unsatisfactory state of things, and they look about for some tribunal which shall give to any question that may be proposed answers absolutely free from risk of error. But how can we eliminate risk of error from the process of finding this tribunal, or, indeed, of determining whether it exists at all? And if we cannot, what have we gained? Archbishop Whately used to tell a story of a bridge at Bath which was so crazy that an old lady was afraid to walk across; so she got herself carried over in a sedan chair. What she gained by that was just not seeing the danger; but the bridge had to bear her own weight and that of the chair and bearers into the bargain. And so those who,

through fear of making wrong decisions, trust themselves to adopt blindfold the decisions of a supposed infallible authority gain nothing but not seeing the risk of error. But, in real truth, their risk of going wrong in each of the decisions adopted blindfold is fully as great as before, and, in addition, they make one judgment which we may confidently pronounce to be wrong—namely, the judgment that the Church of Rome is infallible.

The certainty to which Roman Catholics aspire is a thing different altogether in kind from what we commonly call practical certainty. Newman claims for his certainty the attribute of indefectibility, and he plainly shows that it is his theory on this point which has kept him a Roman Catholic, notwithstanding several shocks his faith has met with since he joined that communion. Newman's idea is this: if you only think a thing to be true, you may to-morrow find reason to think it not to be true; but if you certainly know a thing to be true, truth cannot change—that will be true to-morrow which is true to-day; so that, if we once certainly apprehend a truth, we must hold it fast, convinced that any other truth we may discover can only contradict it in appearance. Thus, he holds that a man can never lose his certitude, and, if he appears to do so, it only proves that he never had had it. For example, if a man believes himself to have become certain of the infallibility of the Roman Church, and, after joining her, becomes disgusted at the definition of the Immaculate Conception or the Pope's personal infallibility, and says, This is more than I bargained for, and quits her communion, this does not show that he has lost his certainty of the Church's infallibility, but that he never had had it. He might have believed all the doctrines which the Church had propounded at the time he joined her, but he did not understand that faith in her inerrancy required him equally to believe all that she might at any time teach.

By way, I suppose, of making his theory more acceptable to a Bible Protestant, Newman puts the following case:—'Suppose,' he says, 'I have a certainty that the Bible is inspired, and that it teaches that Adam was the first man; and

suppose that all ethnologists, philologists, anatomists, and antiquarians, led by a multitude of independent proofs, agreed in holding that there were different races of men, and that Adam had only made his appearance at a definite point of time, in a comparatively modern world: then, if I had believed with an assent short of certainty, this new evidence might make me lose my faith; but otherwise I should still firmly hold what I believed to come from Heaven. I should not argue or defend myself, but only wait for better times. Philosophers might take their course for me; I should consider that they and I thought in different mediums, and that their certitude could not be in antagonism with mine.' I recollect hearing, when I was young, that there were then still surviving Roman Catholic ecclesiastics who, in reference to the Copernican theory of astronomy, took the course here described. They looked upon it as a scientific craze, which had become so epidemic, that direct struggle with it was time wasted. They must only wait until it would blow over.

Dr. Newman owns that he is making an impossible supposition in putting the case that a philosophic discovery might contradict Revelation. But in such a case I am sure that the course which he recommends is an irrational one. No one can rationally maintain the same thing to be theologically true and philosophically false. Men may resolutely look at a question only from one side. A philosopher may shut his eyes to the facts with which theologians are conversant, or *vice versa*. In the case supposed, clearly, Newman would simply refuse to examine the evidence tendered him by the philosophers. But if he did examine, and found it convincing, he would be obliged to revise his former opinion; and either own that what he had taken for a revelation was not one, or, more probably, that he had misunderstood it. Dr. Newman's fallacy is simply this—he knows that what is true must always remain true, and he infers that what men are fully persuaded is true must always remain true. This would be the case if men were infallible, and if their undoubting persuasion always corresponded with the reality of things; but, alas, this is by no means the case. A single example

suffices. For how many ages must all men have believed with undoubting persuasion in the immoveability of the earth we stand on, and yet the opposite doctrine is now taught as part of a child's elementary education?

Indeed, with respect to this word certainty, I may remark, that the more people talk about their certainty the less they really have. If one of you came in and told me, 'I saw the Prince of Wales just now walking down Sackville-street,' I might be a good deal surprised at your news, but there would be nothing in your language to make me think you were saying anything about which you had not full knowledge. But if you said, 'I am certain I saw the Prince of Wales just now,' I should conclude you were by no means assured yourself of the truth of what you said.

But to return. There cannot be a plainer proof that men's so-called certainty does not always correspond with the reality of things, than the fact that there may be opposing certainties. Dr. Newman, for instance, is certain the Pope is infallible, and I am certain he is not. Dr. Newman would get over this by calling his strong conviction certainty, and giving to mine some weaker name. But what is this but assuming that he is infallible, and I am not? And when he refuses to revise his former judgment that the Church of Rome is infallible, notwithstanding that since he came to it the Pope has made two decisions which, if Newman were free to exercise his own judgment, he would pronounce to be wrong, what is this but assuming that he was infallible at the time of his former judgment?

On the contrary, no wise man holds any conclusion of his to be absolutely irreversible. There are some things which we may firmly believe with a full persuasion that no new evidence will turn up to contradict them. In that persuasion we may legitimately refuse to attend to opposing evidence that is manifestly not of the first class. Thus, I have a firm belief in the universality of the law of gravitation. I do not give myself the trouble to examine into stories of contrary facts alleged to take place in darkened rooms, because I know that while the working of the law of gravity is just the

same in the dark and in the light, the absence of light is highly convenient when imposture is attempted. In like manner, I would not lightly give heed to stories affecting the character of a person in whom I had full confidence. But if I made it a canon that on no evidence whatever would I believe anything to that person's disadvantage; if, in any case, I maintained that the conclusion I had drawn from my study of one class of facts must never be abandoned, no matter what new facts might come to light, then my belief could no longer be called faith—it would be prejudice.

I have thought that Cardinal Newman's celebrity required me to give full examination to his attempt to make a philosophic basis of Roman belief, founded on a study of the ordinary laws of human assent; but I think I may safely say that that attempt has totally failed, even in the judgment of his own co-religionists. When Newman's book first came out, one could constantly see traces of its influence in Roman Catholic articles in Magazines and Reviews. Now it seems to have dropped very much out of sight, and the highest Roman Catholic authorities lay quite a different basis for their faith. But I will put off speaking of that till the next Lecture.

V.

MILNER'S AXIOMS.—PART I.

IT follows from the discussions in the last Lectures that we have a perfect right to put out of court all Roman Catholic attempts to prove the infallibility of their Church, as being attempts to build a fabric without any foundation; for it is, in the nature of things, impossible for a fallible man to have infallible certainty that he has discovered someone able to guide him without possibility of error. But I should be sorry to seem to want to get rid of the Roman Catholic arguments by any logical *tour de force*, or in any way to evade meeting them fairly and fully.

I do not think their case can be stated in a more taking way than it was done in a book now rather old, but which was at one time relied on as far and away the most effective book of Roman Catholic controversy, and which has still much circulation and popularity; I mean Milner's *End of Religious Controversy*. Milner begins by laying down three maxims, the truth of which, he says, no rational Christian will dispute. First, our Divine Master Christ, in establishing a religion here on earth, to which all the nations of the earth were invited, left some rule or method by which those persons who sincerely seek for it may certainly find it. Secondly, this rule or method must be secure and never-failing, so as not to be ever liable to lead a rational, sincere inquirer into error, impiety, or immorality of any kind. Thirdly, this rule or method must be universal, adapted to the abilities and other circumstances of all those persons for whom the religion itself was intended—namely, the great bulk of mankind.

Milner applies these maxims to discover a rule of faith. He first considers and rejects two fallacious rules, as not satisfying the prescribed conditions, and then arrives at what he conceives to be the only satisfactory rule—the teaching of his Church. The first rule which he pronounces fallacious is 'a supposed private interpretation, or an immediate light or motion of God's Spirit communicated to the individual.' This rule he takes to be that of the Quakers, the Moravians, and some classes of Methodists. Milner has no difficulty in tracing the working of this rule, and showing that it does not give the security which his maxims demand. He begins with the Montanists, who claimed to have been recipients of a new outpouring of the Holy Spirit; and, touching briefly on other heretics who made similar pretensions, gives a long account of the excesses and impieties committed by John of Leyden and his followers, the Anabaptists, all committed under a full conviction of the uncontrollable inspiration of their perpetrators. Then he goes on to tell of their imitators in England, who called themselves the 'Family of Love'; of the extravagances of the early Quakers; of the antinomian doctrines taught by some of the Methodists, who professed to have received them by immediate inspiration; and he concludes that to make an immediate personal revelation a rule of faith and conduct is to adopt a rule which has led very many well-meaning persons into error and impiety.

I do not disagree with this conclusion; but Milner evidently had not reflected that this rule, which he so clearly shows to be fallacious, is the rule on which his own religion depends. I made it plain on the last day that no external authority can give us absolute freedom from error, unless we can manage in some way to secure from risk of error the process which induces us to rely on that external authority. We examined Newman's attempt to justify that process by a study of the laws which govern human assent, and we found it to be a failure; and I told you then that this speculation of Newman's appears to be little relied on now by Roman Catholics. In fact, it is so certain that none of the natural processes of the human mind is absolutely free from risk of error, that it

is plain that no study of these processes can give Roman Catholics the security which they demand. So they solve the difficulty by a *deus ex machina*. They are not naturally infallible, but God has made them so. It is by a supernatural gift of faith that they accept the Church's teaching, and have a divinely-inspired certainty that they are in the right. Well, now, it is evident that if this be the ground of belief, those who think that they are relying on the Church's infallibility are in reality relying on their own. The whole basis of their system crumbles from under them if it is possible that this supposed supernatural gift of faith can deceive them. At the Vatican Council of 1870, which may be principally known to you by its decree concerning the Infallibility of the Pope, which will afterwards come under our consideration, the more fundamental doctrines concerning God and Reason and Faith and Revelation had been previously discussed; and it was decreed that, though the assent of faith is not a blind motion of the mind, yet that no one can give to the preaching of the Gospel that assent which is necessary to salvation without the illumination and inspiration of the Holy Spirit. The Council proceeds to anathematize the assertion that it is only living faith that worketh by love which is the gift of God. In other words, it is not only what Protestants commonly understand by faith which is the gift of God; but mere belief, even though it does not work by love, is a supernatural gift; and an act of such faith is declared to be a work pertaining to salvation, in which man yields free obedience to God, by consenting to and co-operating with His grace, which it was in man's power to resist. Finally, those are anathematized who say that Catholics have any just cause to call in doubt the faith which they have received under the teaching of the Church, by suspending their assent until they have got a scientific demonstration of the credibility and truth of their faith. This is no mere point of scientific theory. The real check which prevents Roman Catholics from putting to themselves the question, 'Is there not a lie in my right hand?' is the fear lest they should trifle with a supernaturally-communicated gift of faith.

It is evident that if a man tells you, 'I know that I am right, and you are wrong, because I have a divinely-inspired certainty that I am in the right in my opinion,' such a claim does not admit of being met with direct disproof, though it has been sometimes met with the mocking answer, 'Your claim to a supernatural gift of faith means that your doctrines are such, that it requires a miracle to make a man believe them.' We can, however, point out that the claim to have been taught by God's Spirit is made, and certainly on quite as good grounds, by others, who say that they have been led by Him to conclusions quite opposite to the Roman Catholic. And certainly it is quite superfluous to seek a supernatural origin for the feelings of rest, peace, freedom from doubt, which men say they find in the bosom of the Roman Church. These feelings may be obtained by anyone in a perfectly natural way, on the easy terms of resolute abstinence from investigation. But it is, in any case, important to point out that the whole foundation of a Roman Catholic's confidence is just that rule of faith which Milner has taken such pains to prove to be fallacious. When a Romanist claims to have been taught by a supernatural gift of faith to trust his Church, and when a Protestant claims, equally under the guidance of God's Spirit, to have learned that she is unworthy of confidence, and when neither can prove, by miracles or any other decisive test, the superiority of the spiritual guidance which he professes to have himself received, what remains but to own that no certainty can be got from trusting to such supposed supernatural guidance, unless this illumination at the same time so enlighten the understanding as to enable it to give reasons for its faith which other men can perceive to be satisfactory?

The second rule of faith which Milner undertakes to show to be fallacious is the Bible: at least if each man is allowed to interpret it for himself. I think that most of the controversial victories that Roman Catholics win are owing to their being often wrongly met on the point now under discussion. When a Roman Catholic says, 'It is incredible that Christ should have left His people without an infallible

guide, who shall secure them from all risk of error; and no such guide can be found but the Church of Rome,' it is very common for a Protestant to reply, 'Nay, we have such a guide in the Bible.' But it is well that you should be prepared for the turn the discussion is then likely to take. In the first place, observe, it is one question whether the Bible is infallible; another whether it is, in the sense of Milner's requirements, an infallible *guide*. But even the first point the Roman advocates will not allow you to take for granted. I own that it is with a very bad grace they here assume the attitude of unbelievers; for, whoever denies the infallibility of Scripture, they have no right to do so. If the Church be infallible, the Bible is so too; for there is no article of Church doctrine held more strongly, or taught with greater unanimity, by the Church of all times, than the inerrancy of Scripture. Accordingly, in the discussions of the first Reformers, the Bible was common ground to both parties, and the Reformers' proof that part of the teaching of the Church of Rome was erroneous consisted in showing that it was opposed to the Bible. But now the line taken by the Romanist advocate is to say, 'No matter what *we* believe about the Bible, what right have you, on your principles, to believe the same thing?'

Some of Milner's arguments are weak enough, and need not detain us long. For instance, he says that, 'If our Lord had intended His people to learn His religion from a book, He would have written it Himself, or, at least, have commanded His Apostles to write it; and there is no evidence that He did any such thing'—an argument pointless against us, who believe, as he does himself, that the Scriptures were written by inspiration of God's Holy Spirit, and that the Three Persons of the Trinity are One. And the argument admits of a cruel retort. If Christ intended that His people should learn their religion from the Pope, He would have told them to obey the Pope, and listen to his instructions, or, at least, He would have commissioned His Apostles to do so; but in all the recorded words of either our Lord or His Apostles, and in all

their surviving letters, there is not a word about the Pope, from one end to the other. But, dismissing this and some other manifestly weak arguments, the Romanist advocate asks the Protestant: 'If the Scriptures are your sole rule of faith, how do you learn what are the Scriptures? Where do you find a text of Scripture to give you information on this point? If you say you receive certain books because they were written by Apostles, is that a ground for accepting them as infallible? The Apostles were fallible as men: how do you know they were infallible as writers? And, in any case, you receive the Gospels of Mark and Luke, who were not Apostles, and you reject the Epistle of Barnabas, who was. Then, how do you know that the text has been preserved rightly?' Even the biblical criticism of Milner's day afforded him some instances of doubtful readings, as, for instance, the text of the Three Heavenly Witnesses, and the fact that, in the Prayer Book version of the fourteenth Psalm, there are some verses not to be found in the Bible. But if the Bible is a secure guide to anyone, it is not so to the unlearned. If they can even read, they only know the Bible is a translation; and Milner asks them, 'How do you know that the English version which you use is a correct translation?' Of course the recent publication of the Revised New Testament would supply a Roman Catholic controversialist with instances enough where he could maintain that it had been now proved that readings or translations hitherto in use among us were erroneous. Having in this way tried to show that there was too much uncertainty about the Bible to allow it to serve the office of a sure guide, Milner goes on to say, even if the book itself is infallible, it is not so as a guide: that is to say, it does not ensure those who follow its guidance from risk of error. This appears from the great differences of opinion between persons who all profess to have taken their religion from the Bible, and whom we cannot in charity believe to have been insincere in their profession of having honestly tried to follow its guidance. These persons who disagree among themselves cannot all be right. It is plain, therefore, that the Bible, if there be no authorized interpreter,

does not suffice as a guide, in following which there is no danger of going wrong. Well, I think that, without discussing the other difficulties raised by Milner, the last argument, founded on the different results arrived at by students of the Scriptures, is enough to establish his case that the Bible as a guide does not fulfil the conditions which his axioms impose.

Having set aside these two fallacious rules, Milner propounds what he asserts to be the true rule, namely: to the written Word of God to add the unwritten; that is to say, to Scripture to add tradition, and to both to add the Church as an authorized interpreter of the true meaning of the Word of God. Milner abstains from applying to this rule the same searching criticism he had applied to the two others, apparently satisfied with the argument that as the other two rules were wrong, this must be the right one; but if I could go fully into the discussion, it would easily appear that this rule fails as completely as the two others to satisfy the prescribed conditions. One of Milner's conditions, you will remember, is, 'This rule must be secure, never-failing, by which those persons who sincerely seek for Christ's religion shall certainly find it.' Well, in the first place, in spite of this rule, more than half of the seekers (and it would be uncharitable to think that the bulk of them are not sincere) have not found it. A guide is useless if those who want his services cannot make him out. Imagine that a gentleman, who lived in the country at a distance from a railway station, gave an entertainment to his friends. It would be natural that he should make provision that, on their arrival at the station, they should be enabled to find his house. But when they arrive they find a number of competing carmen, all professing to be able to conduct them safely; but, as things turn out, half of them are taken wandering over the country, and never reach the house at all. The entertainer tells the disappointed guests, 'It was all your own fault: I had a servant at the station, and you ought to have known him.' But whosesoever fault it was, the actual result shows that the measures he took for their guidance were neither certain nor never-failing.

Again, the Bible is said to be inadequate as a rule, because there are so many differences of opinion between those who profess to follow its guidance. Are there no differences between those who profess to follow the guidance of the Church of Rome? It would lead me too far if I were to speak in detail of the internal dissensions in the Roman communion. One case, however, is striking enough to be brought before you. Bossuet is the writer who may be said to have made his own the argument against Protestantism derived from the disagreements of its several sects. His work called *The Variations of the Protestant Churches*, published at the end of the seventeenth century, was the most popular book of controversy of his day, and was esteemed by Roman Catholics as a triumphant success. In this he infers that the Protestant Churches have not the guidance of the Holy Spirit, from the differences that exist between various Churches, or between the teaching of the same Church at one time and another.

Many of the differences which Bossuet enumerates relate to very minute points which cannot be regarded as essential to salvation, and on which Christians might be well content to differ. But, indeed, a Protestant seldom feels himself much affected by the argument from variations, which he feels to be equally pointless whether he be disposed to make common cause with non-Episcopal sects or the reverse. In the former case he would say, 'My differences with the orthodox Protestant sects relate merely to unimportant questions of discipline, and so forth; but on all really vital questions we are thoroughly agreed. And Roman Catholics themselves admit that union in essential matters is compatible with difference of opinion on points which superior authority has left open.' But, on the other hand, there is quite as good an answer for one who disowns the Dissenting sects altogether. He may say, 'What is it to me what is held by those people whom you class with me under the common name of Protestant? I have nothing to say to them any more than you have. If it is an argument against me that Baptists and Quakers disagree with me, they do not agree

any more with you.' In fact, there is nothing to prevent any sect from placing itself on one side, and all the rest of the world on the other, and contending that those who disagree with that sect show they are wrong by their disagreements among themselves. For instance, I do not see why this Roman Catholic argument might not be used by a member of the Established Church of England. He might say, 'Dissenters plainly show that they are wrong by their differences among themselves. Protestant Dissenters accuse us of believing too much, and Roman Catholic Dissenters accuse us of believing too little. When such opposite charges are brought, it is plain we must be just right.' The fact is, what the existence of variations of belief among Christians really proves is, that our Master, Christ, has not done what Roman Catholic theory requires He should have done, namely, provided His people with means of such full and certain information on all points on which controversy can be raised, that there shall be no room for difference of opinion among them. But it is ridiculous to build on these variations an argument for the superiority of one sect over another.

But my purpose in now mentioning the subject is to tell how Bossuet, whose name is specially connected with the argument from the variations of Protestantism, has himself become the most signal instance of the variations of Romanism. Bossuet was, in his time, 'the Eagle of Meaux': the terror of Protestant sectaries, the most trusted champion of his Church. But he fought for her not only against the Protestants, but against the theory of Infallibility, then called Ultramontane, because held on the other side of the mountains, but rejected by the Gallican Church. In another Lecture I shall speak more at length of the principles of Gallicanism and of its history. Suffice it here to mention that one of its fundamental doctrines was, that the doctrinal decisions of the Pope were not to be regarded as final; that they might be reviewed and corrected, or even rejected, by a General Council or by the Church at large. A formal treatise of Bossuet in proof of this principle was a storehouse of argu-

ments, largely drawn on in the controversies of the years 1869–70. But this principle of his was condemned with an anathema at the Vatican Council of the latter year.

Now observe, this was not a difference of opinion on a minor point—some point on which the guide had given no instruction, and with respect to which, therefore, his followers were free to take their own course. The question here at issue was the vital one—who the guide was that was to be followed. A man does not follow another as his guide, though he may be walking along the same road, if he takes that road only because he himself thinks the road to be the right one. And so, though on a number of questions Bossuet might side against the Protestants and with the Pope of his day, it is plain that he was not, on principle, following the Pope's guidance: consequently, Bossuet is treated by the predominant Roman Catholic school of the present day as no better than a Protestant. Just as he himself had argued that outside the Roman Church there was no truth or consistency, and that Protestantism was but an inconsistent compromise with infidelity, so Cardinal Manning says nearly the same things of that theory of Gallicanism of which Bossuet was the ablest defender. 'It was exactly the same heresy,' Manning declares, 'which in England took the form of the Reformation, and in France that of Gallicanism.' Dr. Brownson's *Review*, the chief organ of American Romanism, treated Bossuet's opinions with even less ceremony. It said, 'Gallicanism was always a heresy. The Gallicans are as much alien from the Church or Commonwealth of Christ as are Arians, Lutherans, Calvinists, Anabaptists, Methodists, Spiritists, or Devil-worshippers.'

Could the irony of events give a more singular refutation than this? A man writes a book to prove that Protestantism is false because Protestants disagree among themselves, and Romanism is true because its doctrines are always the same, and its children never disagree; and in a few years he is himself classed with Devil-worshippers by the most accredited authorities of the religion which he defends, and whose doctrines he supposes himself, and is supposed by

everyone else at the time, most thoroughly to understand. For all we can tell, the Romanist champions of the present day may be in no better case. Can Cardinal Manning be secure that, as the development of Roman doctrine proceeds, he may not be left stranded outside the limits of orthodoxy, and be classed with Devil-worshippers by the Romanist champions of the next century?

We seem now to have arrived at a most uncomfortable conclusion. We have agreed that Christ must have given His people some rule, and we have tried all the rules that have been proposed, and found that all must be pronounced, on Milner's principles, fallacious. We are forced, then, to try back on Milner's axioms, and see whether we were not over hasty in admitting them. You will find on examination that Milner's argument, in substance, reduces itself to this: There is an infallible guide somewhere—no one claims to be that guide but the Church of Rome, therefore it must be she. When you ask, How do you know that there is an infallible guide somewhere? he answers, That is a proposition of which no rational Christian can doubt. I have already told you, whenever you want to make an argument in favour of a false opinion, to prove laboriously any true propositions it may be convenient to you to make use of; but to get quickly over the false propositions you introduce, treating them as self-evident principles which no rational person can dispute. I have already expressed my opinion that if you concede Milner his axioms, and then try to take your stand on the Bible as a guide which satisfies the conditions which these axioms impose, you will certainly be defeated. But, in real truth, Milner might have spared himself the trouble of writing the rest of his book, when he begins by taking for granted that God has provided us with an infallible guide, or, to use his own words, with 'a never-failing rule, which is never liable to lead a sincere inquirer into error of any kind.' Observe the monstrous character of the claim. We are to be supernaturally guarded not merely against deadly error, but against error of any kind. But, in truth, this monstrous claim is absolutely necessary in order to make out Milner's case; for we should

not want the help of the Church of Rome if we might be content in matters of religion with that homely kind of certainty which is all that God gives us for the conduct of the most important affairs of life: an assurance that may well be called certainty as to substantial matters, shading off to high probability when we descend to the leading details, and leaving room for doubt and difference of opinion when we come down to subordinate details. I do not see how any Roman Catholic can seriously defend Milner's axiom unless he first mend it by claiming supernatural protection, not against error of any kind, but error inconsistent with holding the truths necessary to salvation. I shall not quarrel with anyone for holding that if God required men to believe certain doctrines on pain of damnation, He would propound these truths so plainly that no one should be able to mistake them. This is a maxim of which I have already taken the benefit against the Church of Rome. For, while it is said that Christians are bound, under pain of damnation, to submit to the Church of Rome, that doctrine has been taught so obscurely that more than half the Christian world has not been able to find it out. But *we* say that the revelation God has given us is, in essential matters, easy to be understood. Roman Catholics dwell much on the difficulty of understanding the Scriptures, and quote St. Peter's saying, that the Scriptures contain many things difficult and 'hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest to their own destruction.' But we say that the obscurities of Scripture do not hide those vital points, the knowledge of which is necessary to salvation; and we have the authority of many ancient fathers to support us in so thinking. Chrysostom, for instance, says 'all things are plain and simple in the Holy Scriptures; all things necessary are evident.'* 'The Apostles and Prophets have made all things proceeding from them plain and evident to all; in order that each person, even by himself, may be able to learn what is said from the mere reading of it.'† He gives this as a reason why God chose men in humble station to be the writers of

* *In 2 Thess.*, Hom. III., vol. xi., p. 528.
† Hom. III., *de Laz.*, vol. i., p. 379.

books of Scripture. In like manner, says St. Augustine, 'God hath made the Scriptures to stoop to the capacities of babes and sucklings.'* 'Scarcely anything is drawn out from the more obscure places of Scripture which is not most plainly spoken elsewhere.'† Accordingly, when any of the early Fathers has occasion to make an enumeration of the truths which Christians ought to know, he usually contents himself with a summary of doctrines nearly identical with that contained in the Apostles' Creed, all the Articles of which contain truths that lie on the very surface of Scripture, and do not require any laborious investigation of texts in order to arrive at them.

But, for thus holding that the list of truths necessary to be known in order to salvation is short and simple, we have the authority of the Roman Church herself. No one is so unreasonable as to expect ordinary members of the Church to be acquainted with all the decisions of Popes and Councils, in the correctness of which they are nevertheless obliged to believe. Take only one Council—the Council of Trent. Has any Roman Catholic that is not a professed theologian, studied its decrees? If an unlearned Roman Catholic were asked to explain the doctrines of Justification and Original Sin, steering clear of Lutheranism on the one hand and of Pelagianism on the other, taking care not to give any countenance to the Jansenists, but also taking care not to fall foul of St. Augustine, we may be sure that if he was mad enough to undertake the task, he would not go far in his statement without finding himself involved in some of the anathemas of which that Council was so liberal. There are, on a rough calculation, one hundred and fifty doctrines condemned by it, with a formal anathema. An anathema is, in fact, the way by which the Council indicates that the doctrine which it propounds is '*de fide*.'

But an unlearned person is not expected even to understand the terms in which the doctrine is conveyed. Dr. Newman has been so good as to furnish me with an example.

* Enarr. *in Psalm.* viii. 8, vol. iv., p. 42.

† *De Doct. Chr.* ii. 8, vol. iii., p. 22.

What sense, he asks, can a child or a peasant, nay, or any ordinary Catholic, put upon the Tridentine Canons, even in translation, such as 'Si quis dixerit homines, sine Christi justitia per quam nobis meruit justificari, aut per eam ipsam formaliter justos esse, anathema sit.' Yet these doctrinal enunciations, he adds, are *de fide*. Peasants are bound to believe them as well as controversialists, and to believe them as truly as they believe our Lord to be God.* I do not know that the canons of the Council, held since Newman's book was written, are more intelligible to the unlearned; for example, 'Si quis dixerit deum esse ens universale seu indefinitum quod sese determinando constituat rerum universitatem in genera species et individua distinctam, anathema sit.' Of these, and such like propositions, which an unlearned Roman Catholic is bound to believe, he is not in the least expected to know even the meaning. The decisions of councils are intended for the instruction of those who make theology their study, and not for that of ordinary members of the flock. While the Church does her duty in providing scientific theologians with a guide to any of the bye-paths of theology they may be tempted to explore, she does not invite the unlearned to enter into these mazes; and the great doctrines of the Gospel constitute the broad highway of salvation, plain, easy to be found, and in which the least learned member of the Church can walk without fear of error. According to Roman Catholic teaching, an individual member of the Church is forbidden to *reject* any doctrine taught by the Church; but he is not bound to know all that she teaches. He must believe that she teaches true doctrines, but he need not know what these doctrines are. The list of doctrines which he is bound to *know*, as well as to *believe*, is (as we shall presently see) a very short one.

The distinction which I have just stated is sometimes expressed as a distinction between explicit and implicit belief. When you accept any truth, you take it with all its consequences, though you may never have drawn them out, and do not know all that is involved in the assent you have given.

* *Grammar of Assent*, p. 142.

When you believe that the Church cannot err, in that belief is involved, as a necessary consequence, belief in all that the Church has taught, or may at any time teach, however ignorant of her actual teaching you may be. Now though, according to Roman theory, faith in the Church's teaching is necessary to salvation, that faith need not be explicit. Implicit faith is when a person is persuaded that the teaching of the Church is all true, though he imperfectly knows what that teaching is; explicit faith, when he, besides, has an intelligent knowledge of the doctrines in which he believes. The best illustration of implicit faith is afforded by the story of *Fides Carbonarii*. The story, in some shape, you have probably heard; but you may as well hear it in its original form as told by Cardinal Hosius.* The Cardinal is proving that if you trust only in Scripture, you must be worsted in every conflict with the devil, who can argue out of it much better than you; and he tells a story of a poor collier who when asked by a learned man what he believed, repeated the Creed, and, when asked what more he believed, answered, 'I believe what the Church believes.' 'And what does the Church believe?' 'The Church believes what I believe.' 'And what do the Church and you both believe?' 'The Church and I believe the same thing.' The learned man was disposed to smile at the collier's simplicity. But some time after, when he was on his death-bed, Satan tempted him with assaults on his faith, to parry which all his learning was vain, and, every time the Evil One questioned him how he believed, he was glad to reply, 'ut carbonarius.'

Such faith as this is held to be sufficient for salvation. It is enough if the individual humbly receives all that is propounded to him on God's authority, and does not, in the pride of his reason, reject truths that he knows to be part of Divine revelation; and he is not to be blamed if he does not explicitly hold doctrines which he has never been properly informed were part of God's revelation through the Church. Nay, he may hold two opposite doctrines, the one explicitly, the other implicitly. He may have formed his own opinion

* *Confutatio Brentii*, lib. iii., *De Auctor. Sac. Scrip.*

on a point of doctrine, without being aware that his view had been condemned by the Church, and he may be, at the same time, fully desirous to believe all that the Church teaches. In this case, it is held, his implicit true faith will save him, notwithstanding his explicit false faith; or, as the distinction is otherwise expressed, though he hold *material* heresy, he is not *formally* heretical. It is in this way that the early Fathers are defended when their language is directly opposed to decisions since made by Rome. Cyprian may oppose the supremacy of the Roman See; Chrysostom may use language directly opposed to Transubstantiation; elsewhere he may impute sin to the Virgin Mary; Bernard may vehemently oppose the doctrine that she was conceived without sin. But these Fathers are held to be excused, because in their time the Church had not spoken distinctly. They would, no doubt, have spoken as she does now, if they had been privileged to hear her voice expressed on the questions referred to. In will they agreed with the Church, and would have been pained to dissent from her, though their actual expressions be directly opposed to her doctrine.

I cannot help remarking, in passing, how this theory represents the Church, not as helping men on their heavenly way, but as making the way of salvation more difficult. Every interposition of her authority closes up some way to heaven which had been open before. A couple of hundred years ago a Roman Catholic might believe, without hazard of salvation, that the Virgin Mary either was or was not conceived without sin. Leading men were arrayed on both sides. But since Pius IX., in 1852, promulgated the dogma of the Immaculate Conception, no one can call it in question, on peril of forfeiting his salvation. So, in like manner, of the dogma of the Pope's personal infallibility, and a host of other questions. Now, we could understand the Church's office if the case was this, that a knowledge of certain doctrines being necessary to salvation, the Church was appointed to publish these doctrines so plainly that none could mistake them. But the case is just the reverse. The guidance of the Church is represented as needed, not for the publication of truths in themselves

necessary to be known, but for the solution of problems raised by speculative theologians, with respect to which it might have been free to men to hold either view if the Church had but held her peace. Suppose that we were starting on a mountain expedition, and that a professed guide beset us with clamorous representations of the absolute necessity of engaging his services. There was a multitude of misleading paths, there were precipices, snowdrifts, concealed crevasses: it was certain death to venture over the pass without a guide. Suppose that when, on these representations, we had engaged his services, he told us that we had nothing to do but follow the great, broad path before us; that there were, indeed, many intricate side-paths, but that into these we need not enter; the only essential point being that we should be persuaded that he *could* guide us safely through them. In such a case, I think we should feel that we had been swindled out of our fee on false pretences, and that, instead of *our* absolutely wanting a guide, the truth was that it was the guide who absolutely wanted us. And our faith in the guide would be a little tried if, when we came to a place where two paths diverged, and asked him which we were to follow, he replied, that if he had not been there to direct us, we might have safely taken either way, as many had already got safe to their journey's end by both roads; but that now we had heard him direct us to take one path, we should certainly come to grief if we took the other.

You may naturally inquire what is the actual practice of the Church of Rome, with regard to insisting on an actual knowledge of certain truths, in addition to the general knowledge that the Church is able to teach rightly concerning them. It is clear that lay people are not to be sent off to explore the huge folios which contain the decrees of councils. What is it that for their soul's health they are obliged to know? A popular little manual circulated by thousands, and called, *What every Christian must know*, enables us to answer this question. It tells us that every Christian must know the four great truths of faith, namely:—'I. There is one God. II. In that God there are Three Persons.

III. Jesus became man and died for us. IV. God will reward the good in heaven, and punish the wicked in hell.' This list of necessary truths is not long, but some Roman Catholics have contended that it might be shortened; pointing out that since men were undoubtedly saved before Christ's coming without any explicit faith in the Incarnation or in the doctrine of the Trinity, an explicit faith in these doctrines cannot be held to be necessary to salvation.* Nor does such faith seem to be demanded in a certain papal attempt to define the minimum of necessary knowledge. Pope Innocent IV., in his Commentary on the Decretals, lays down that it is enough for the laity to attend to good works; and, for the rest, to believe implicitly what the Church believes. Those who have the cure of souls must distinctly know the articles of the Creeds. Bishops ought to know more, being bound to give a reason to everyone who asks it. For the lower clergy, who have neither leisure for study nor money to bear its expense, it will be enough if they learn as much as the laity and a little more. For instance, as being constantly employed in attendance on the altar, they ought to know that the Body of Christ is made in the Sacrament of the Altar. And if they have the means of paying teachers, it would be a sin if they did not acquire more explicit knowledge than the laity.†

Although, in the first editions of Father Furniss's little manual, which I have already mentioned, only the four great truths of faith are declared to be necessary to be known; the later editions add the doctrine of the Sacraments, namely—'Baptism takes away original sin; Confession takes away actual sin; and the Blessed Sacrament is the body and blood of Christ.' But take this list of necessary truths at the longest, and it certainly has the merit of brevity. And we may think it strange that a modern writer has succeeded in doing what the writers of the New Testament tried to do, and

* This view is taken by Gury, *Compendium of Moral Theology*, i. 124, quoted by Littledale, *Plain Reasons*, p. 75.

† Innocent IV., *Comm. in Librum Primum Decretalium*, lib. I., cap. i., sects. 2, 3, 6.

are said to have failed in. It was certainly the object of the New Testament writers to declare the truths necessary to salvation. St. John (xx. 31) tells us his object in writing—'These are written, that you might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through His name.' Yet we are required to believe that these apostles and evangelists, who wrote under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, performed their task so badly, that one who should have recourse to their pages for guidance is more likely than not to go astray, and is likely to find nothing but perplexity and error. Strange, indeed, that inspired writers should fail in their task: stranger still, that writers who claim no miraculous assistance should be able to accomplish it in half-a-dozen lines. But the main point is, that if the list of necessary truths is so short, the necessity for an infallible guide disappears. The four great truths of faith, just enumerated, are held as strongly by Protestants, who dispense with the guidance of the Church of Rome, as by those who follow it.

The great argument by which men are persuaded to believe that there is at least somewhere or another an infallible guide is, that it is incredible that God should leave us without sure guidance when our eternal salvation is at stake. It is thought that, if it is once conceded that an infallible guide exists somewhere, the case of Rome will be established by the absence of competition from anyone making a similar claim. Now, we saw that Milner's axiom was altogether extravagant. He demanded that God should miraculously secure men from error of *any kind*. Surely, it cannot be required that we should be given certain knowledge on all possible subjects? All that with any plausibility can be demanded is, that we should be guarded against error *destructive of salvation*. But now it is evident that infallible guidance cannot be asserted to be necessary, except in cases where explicit knowledge is necessary. If our readiness to believe all that God has revealed, *without knowing it*, is enough for our salvation, there is an end to the pretence that it was necessary to the salvation of the world that God should provide means to make men infallibly *know* the truth. Here is

a specimen of what Roman Catholics call an act of faith: 'O my God, because Thou art true, and hast revealed it, I believe that Thou art One God; I believe that in Thy Godhead there are Three Persons; I believe that Thy Son Jesus became man, and died for us; I believe that Thou wilt reward the good in heaven, and punish the wicked in hell; I believe all that the Catholic Church teaches; and in this belief I will live and die.' In other words, this act of faith is a profession of explicit belief in the four great truths of faith, and of implicit belief in all the teaching of the Church. Now, substitute the word 'Bible' for the word 'Church,' and a Protestant is ready to make the same profession. He will declare his belief in the four truths already enumerated, and in all that the Bible teaches. If a Roman Catholic may be saved who actually contradicts the teaching of his Church, because he did not in intention oppose himself to her, why may not a Protestant be saved, in like manner, who is sincerely and earnestly desirous to believe all that God has revealed in the Scripture, and who has learned from the Scripture those four great truths of faith, and many other truths which make wise unto salvation, even if there be some points on which he has wrongly interpreted the teaching of Scripture? Have we not as good a right in this case as in the other to say that his mistaken belief will not be fatal to one who, notwithstanding his error, is of an humble, teachable disposition, and who does not wilfully reject anything that he knows God to have revealed? In fact, if it were even true that a belief in Roman Infallibility is necessary to salvation, a Protestant would be safe. For, since he believes implicitly everything that God has revealed, if God has revealed Roman Infallibility, he believes that too. Thus the argument for the necessity of an infallible guide has no plausibility, unless, with regard to the absolute necessity to salvation of an explicit belief, we hold a theory far more rigid than even the Church of Rome has ventured to propound.

There is, however, something more to be said before we can part with the discussion of Milner's axiom.

VI.

MILNER'S AXIOMS.—PART II.

IN the last Lecture I tried to show that, if Milner's axiom were limited to an assertion about saving truth—that is to say, truth an explicit knowledge of which is necessary to salvation—it would be perfectly useless to one desirous to establish the necessity of an infallible guide. I wish now to show that, if Milner's axiom be asserted not only with regard to truths necessary to salvation, but also to truths highly important and useful, then the axiom is not true. There is an immense amount of knowledge, both secular and religious, highly important for man to possess, but for which God has not seen fit to provide certain never-failing means whereby men may attain to it, and consequently which, as a matter of fact, many men do fail of obtaining. I am the more particular in stating this, because I should be sorry if the previous discussion had led you to think that I represented the great bulk of God's Revelation as useless, and that I taught that, provided a man be made acquainted with that minimum of knowledge which is absolutely necessary to salvation, it is a matter of small importance whether any further knowledge be communicated to him. I hold the gaining of such knowledge to be of the very highest use and importance; but I say that all we know of God's dealings forbids us to take for granted that, because knowledge of any kind is of great value to man, God will make it impossible for him to fail to acquire it.

There is one piece of vitally important knowledge which Roman Catholics must own God has not given men never-failing means for attaining: I mean the knowledge what is the

true Church. They must own that the institution of an infallible Church has not prevented the world from being overrun with heresy. They do not number in their communion half of those who profess the name of Christ. We need only call to mind our own Church, with its important ramifications in Scotland, the Colonies, and America; the dissenting bodies in England and America; foreign Protestants in Scandinavia and Germany; the Greek Church in Russia, and other Eastern communities. We need not discuss how much of essential truth is preserved by each of these bodies. Their very existence shows that it is as hard to find the true Church as the true doctrine; for it would be grossly unfair to deny that there are among these different bodies many sincere inquirers after truth. In whatever else these Churches disagree, they agree in denying that Rome has made out her claim to infallibility and supremacy. It is plain, then, that God has not endowed His Church with credentials so convincing as irresistibly to command men's assent; and, according to Roman theory, He works a stupendous miracle in vain. To guard Christians against error, He works a perpetual miracle in order to provide them with an infallible guide to truth, and yet He neglects to furnish that guide with sufficient proof of his infallibility. Nay, He allows that infallibility to be wielded by men who have made themselves so distrusted through deceit and imposture and other evil practices, that a prejudice is excited against their pretensions. This one consideration is sufficient to overturn the *a priori* proof that there must be an infallible guide, because we want one, and because it seems incredible that God should leave us without any means necessary for the attainment of religious truth. The proof equally shows that such a guide ought to be able to produce unmistakeable credentials; and the claims of one who has been rejected by half the Christian world are by that very rejection disproved.

But we may further show in the case of secular knowledge how much there is very desirable for us to possess, which God has given us no certain means of attaining. Man is left in a variety of cases to act on his own responsibility and to the

best of his fallible judgment; exposed to various dangers, and called on for the exercise of diligent care, which, in point of fact, very often is not exercised. No one who has read Butler's *Analogy* can be at a loss to expose the fallacy of inferring that because a thing seems to us desirable, God must therefore have constituted His world so that we shall be sure to have it. To quote one of his analogies, take the case of disease and the remedies for it. If we might have indulged our conjectures, we should have imagined that there would have been no such thing as disease in the world. But, at least, we might argue that, if God did, in His mercy, provide remedies for disease, these remedies would, to parody Milner's words, have been 'certain, never-failing, such, in short, as to free those who use them from ill-health of every kind'; and if a quack were to present himself, declaring that such were the remedies he was possessed of, and that we ought to acknowledge the justice of his pretensions without examination, because no one else claimed to have such remedies as we should have expected God to provide for us, while he alone spoke with confidence, and never admitted the possibility of his falling into error;—such a quack would have all the titles to our obedience that the Church of Rome has, according to the arguments of many of its advocates, who seem to think that we are bound to receive him who talks biggest and brags loudest, and will not own that he may sometimes make a mistake.

But analogy furnishes us with a still better answer to the Roman Catholic argument about Infallibility. One simple test will expose the fallacy of any of these arguments. Substitute the word 'sin' for the word 'error,' and examine whether the argument will then lead to true conclusions. It is not only our own speculations that would lead us to think God would have provided means to banish sin from the world. The Scriptures would certainly, at first sight, lead us to conclude that it would, at least, be banished from the Church. There is not a single promise to the Church that does not speak even more distinctly of her members being led into the ways of holiness than into the way of truth. The name 'holy' is the distinctive title of the Church, 'saints'

that of her members. She is described as 'a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing.' And it is true that the Church has done this great work in the world, that she has made a degree of holiness possible, which was not so before: and not only possible, but common; that being now ordinary among Christians which before had been only the attainment of some distinguished saints. But it is not true that this holiness is either perfect or universal. Roman Catholic historians themselves acknowledge the moral corruption which at times overspread the highest places of the Church, not excepting him whom they account its head. I will quote the well-known words with which Baronius begins his account of the tenth century: 'A new age begins, which, from its asperity and barrenness of good, has been wont to be called the Iron Age; from the deformity of its overflowing wickedness, the Leaden Age; and, from its paucity of writers, the Dark Age. Standing on the threshold of which, we have thought it necessary to premise something, lest the weak-minded should be scandalized if he should happen to behold the abomination of desolation in the Temple. . . .* The case is plainly such, that scarcely anyone can believe, nay, scarcely ever shall believe, unless he see it with his own eyes, and handle it with his own hands, what unworthy, foul, and deformed, yea, what execrable and abominable things the sacred Apostolic See, upon whose hinge the universal Catholic Church turns, has been compelled to

* In the passage which I here omit, Baronius turns it into an argument in favour of the Roman Church, that the fact that she survived a period which, according to all human calculation, ought to have been fatal to her, proves that she must have been under Divine protection. He borrowed this paradox from Boccaccio, who had presented it in the shape of a tale about a Jew, who, being pressed to embrace Christianity, declared his intention of visiting Rome, and judging of the religion by the lives of Christ's Vicar, his cardinals and bishops. His Christian friends were horrified, knowing that the spectacle of the sensuality, avarice, and simony which tainted all at Rome, from the least to the greatest, was better calculated to make a Christian turn Jew than a Jew become a Christian. But the Jewish visitor, on his return, presented himself for baptism, declaring himself convinced of the divinity of a religion which survived, notwithstanding that its chief ministers were doing their very best to destroy it. The popularity of this tale in pre-Reformation times shows that, if the Bishop of Rome was then believed to be a guide to truth, he was not imagined to be an example of moral purity.

suffer. O shame! O grief! how many monsters, horrible to be seen, were intruded by secular princes into that seat which is to be reverenced by angels; how many tragedies were consummated; with what filth was it her fate to be spattered, who was herself without spot or wrinkle; with what stench to be infected; with what loathsome impurities to be defiled, and by these to be blackened with perpetual infamy!' And, again, the same historian writes (*Ann.* 912): 'What was then the face of the Holy Roman Church? How most foul, when harlots, at once most powerful and most base, ruled at Rome, at whose will Sees were changed, bishops were presented, and, what is horrible to hear and unutterable, pseudo-bishops, their paramours, were intruded into the See of St. Peter, who are enrolled in the catalogue of Roman pontiffs only for the sake of marking the times!'

Thus, with respect to Christ's promises that the gates of hell should not prevail against His Church, that He would be with it always, even to the end of the world, and so forth, we see what they do *not* mean. We see that they contained no pledge that ungodliness should never assault His Church; that overflowing wickedness should not abound in her; nay, that monsters of impiety and immorality should not be seen sitting in her highest places. The question is, therefore, whether God hates error so very much more than He hates sin, that He has taken precautions against the entrance of the one which He has not seen fit to use in order to guard against the other. We hold that what He has done in both cases is strikingly parallel. First, His great gift to His people, that of the Holy Spirit, is equally their safeguard against sin and against error. He is equally the Spirit of Truth and the Spirit of Holiness. It is His office to inform our understanding, by taking of the things of Christ and showing them to us; and to direct our wills, and make them conformed to that of Christ. And the means He uses for both ends are the same. The Scriptures are equally guides to truth and to holiness. They make us wise unto salvation. They are 'a light unto our feet, and a lamp unto our paths.' 'Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to Thy word.' And the Church also is used by

the Holy Ghost, both as a witness and guardian of Christian truth and an instructor in Christian morality. She has been called (and we shall afterwards see what good claim she has to the title) the 'pillar and ground of the truth.' And she has certainly been in the world a preacher of righteousness. And yet the use of all these means has not banished either sin or error from the world. Even those 'who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit,' are still not impeccable. Signs of human frailty betray themselves in the conduct of men whom we must own to be good men—not merely good with natural amiability, but really sanctified by the Spirit of God. And those who have so been guided are no more infallible than they are impeccable. In proportion, indeed, as they live close to God, and seek by prayer for the Spirit's guidance, so will their spiritual discernment increase. They whose will it is to do His will are made by Him to know of the doctrine whether it be of Him. But yet, as their holiness falls short of perfection, so also does their knowledge. 'If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves'; and if we say that we have no error, we deceive ourselves no less. And since not only may individuals fall into sin, but, as is owned in the extract I have read from Baronius, ungodliness may overspread the Church widely; so we see no reason to doubt that not only individuals may err, but Christians collectively, or large bodies of them, may make doctrinal mistakes. The analogy I have been insisting on between the understanding and the will, and the operations of God's Spirit on both, is of the utmost importance in this controversy.

One great advantage of considering the difficulty of the existence of error in the Church in connexion with the great problem of the existence of evil in the world is that, while there is no reason in either case for doubting as to the matter of fact—the existence of the evil complained of—whatever considerations are available in the one case for mitigating the difficulty, and reconciling the evil which we see with the goodness of God, are available also in the other.

Take, first, the physical evil which exists in the world. Great part of human suffering arises from an insufficient

supply of the natural wants of food and warmth. God could, if He had pleased, have either created us without these wants, or with a never-failing supply for them. If we ask why He has not done so, and why He has left it possible that men should perish of cold and famine, as thousands of our fellow-creatures have done, though we cannot completely solve the question, we can, at least, see this, that with God our comfort is subordinate to our education. It is the struggle to obtain a supply for these natural wants which has drawn forth the energies of man's nature. As Virgil tells us, the Father of all did not wish the way of sustenance to be too easy, 'curis acuens mortalia corda.' And, in point of fact, the human race has been singularly unprogressive in those tropical regions where there is little demand on man's energies; and the greatest advances in civilization have been made in the sterner climates, where the conflict with nature has early elicited the employment of man's full powers.

So, likewise, with regard to secular knowledge. God might have provided us from the first with a knowledge of all things needful; but actually He has withheld a knowledge of much that is necessary for the safety and comfort of life. Many of the most useful parts of our present knowledge were long unknown to the world, and were reserved to stimulate and reward the pursuit of the successful inquirer. Our need of knowledge and our desire for it have been the means which God has used to develop in us all those faculties which have the discovery of truth for their object. And, as if to show how much less important in His eyes it is that we should possess knowledge than that we should be trained to seek for it, He has annexed a pleasure to the discovery of truth, distinct from, and higher than, that which attends its possession. I fear there is none of you who can have found in his study of geometry, or hydrostatics, or natural philosophy, such pleasure as Pythagoras is said to have felt at the discovery of the forty-seventh proposition of the First Book of Euclid; or Archimedes, when he rushed from the bath shouting out his εὕρηκα; or Newton, when his trembling hands could scarce complete the calculation which proved that it was the same

force which keeps the moon in her orbit that draws an apple to the ground. Thus God, both with regard to body and mind, has dealt with us in such a way as if it were more important in His eyes that we should be trained to seek for the supply of needful wants than that we should actually obtain it: at least, while He stimulates us to the search, and rewards us if successful, He has not exempted us from the risk of failure.

And God has dealt with us in the same way in things that pertain to the perfection of our moral nature. If we are perplexed why He should not have excluded from His world the possibility of sin and vice, at least we can see that the virtue which has been braced and strengthened by conflict with temptation, and victory over it, is a thing of much higher order than the virtue which consists in the absence of temptation. And here, too, we perceive that God trains us and disciplines us for the higher excellence, even at the terrible risk which attends failure. Now, can it be made an objection to Revelation that it represents the Almighty as pursuing the same course with respect to religious truth that He has adopted in every other kind of truth; or, rather, were it otherwise, would there not be a presumption that such a revelation did not proceed from the Author of nature? God has made the very importance of religious truth, not a reason for releasing us from all pains of investigation, but a motive to stimulate us more intensely to discipline ourselves in that candid, truth-loving frame of mind in which alone the search for truth is likely to be successful. How prejudicial an effect a contrary dispensation might have had on all our mental faculties, we have a striking proof in the different progress of mind in Protestant and Roman Catholic countries since the Reformation. And there is reason to infer that, when a Church sets up a claim for infallibility, the mischief done is not merely that such a Church can teach false doctrine without detection, but that even if a Church professing itself infallible actually did not teach a single doctrine that was not perfectly true, the religious condition of its members might be inferior to that of the members of our Church as much, and in the same way, as

the civilization of a South Sea Islander is inferior to that of a European.

We can see what a benumbing effect the doctrine of infallibility has on the intellects of Roman Catholics by the absence of religious disputes in that communion. They boast of this as a perfection; but it is, in truth, a sign of deadness, a sign of the indifference of all to the subjects in question. Why is it that the question of the Immaculate Conception, which convulsed the Christian world four centuries ago, was disposed of by Pius IX. with scarcely a murmur? It was because the people did not care about the matter. The superstitious were glad to pay a compliment to the great object of their veneration, but whether what they asserted was true, I suppose hardly ten lay Roman Catholics in Europe ever troubled their heads. And if the question brought before the Vatican Council had been of a purely spiritual nature, had the bishops been only required to affirm such a doctrine as the Assumption of the Virgin Mary—that is to say, to assert a historical fact without a particle of evidence—I do not think many would have rebelled. It was because the doctrine of the Pope's personal Infallibility had bearings on the practical business of this world; because its assertion was supposed to be intended for the preservation or recovery of the Pope's temporal sovereignty; because the claim would enable him to interfere with more effect on questions of toleration, civil liberty, marriage, and education, that so much difficulty was made about conceding it.

I cannot help quoting words written by Mr. Maskell, one of the early Oxford perverts, on the occasion of the decree of the Vatican Council. They express his natural indignation at seeing his whole Church rush blindfold into acquiescence in a decision which he knew to be false; but he does not seem to have reflected that the state of mind which can acquiesce so indifferently in any decision of authority, is the natural result of that belief in the need of an infallible guide which led himself astray. He says: 'There are numbers of people who take on trust, without consideration, what they are asked to believe in matters of religion; some from habit and want

of discipline in their education; some from a dislike of trouble; some from what they pretend to be a proper subjection to their teachers, thus trying to throw upon others a responsibility for which themselves will have to answer to God hereafter; some from sheer carelessness and want of interest; some, once more, because they do not comprehend what is involved in their assent. To call such an assent faith, is utterly to miscall it. There is very little faith in it. A state of mind which can admit so readily of additions to its creed would be very likely not long to withstand a demand to change it altogether.'

This extract truly describes the practical effect of stunting men's intelligence, in the hope of making their faith more lively. The faith generated by such a process is found not to be worthy of the name. If any human system were to propose to keep men virtuous, by keeping them always in the state of childhood, and never permitting them to govern their own conduct, such a system would be plainly opposed to the course which the Author of nature has preferred. Equally opposed to His method is any system which proposes to preserve men from error by keeping them in the state of childhood, and by giving them truths to be received on authority without inquiry. And it is opposed not only to the course of nature, but to the commands of Scripture, which enjoins us to be 'ready to give every man a reason of the hope that is in us': 'in malice, indeed, to be children, but in understanding to be men.'

A Romanist, as I have said, must acknowledge that the existence of an infallible Church does not exclude error from the world, for more than half of those who call themselves Christians unfortunately cannot be convinced of the claims of that Church on their allegiance. But, while the existence of error remains as distressing a problem to the Romanist as to us, he is deprived of the compensation which we find in the improved condition of those who have honestly sought for truth and been successful. The problem is the same to him as that of the existence of sin in the world would be to us, if while all the vice in the world remained the same, we could find nowhere examples of any higher kind of virtue than that which consists in the absence of temptation.

VII.

THE CHURCH'S OFFICE OF TEACHING.

ON the last day I sufficiently showed that the foundation for their system, which Roman Catholics assume as self-evident, namely, that God has appointed someone on earth able to give infallible guidance to religious truth, admits of no proof, and is destitute of all probability. But when we say that God has not provided us with infallible guidance, we are very far from saying that He has provided for us no guidance at all. I do not think a Protestant can render a greater service to the cause of Romanism than by depreciating the value of the guidance towards the attainment of religious truth given us by the Church which Christ has founded. 'Hoc Ithacus velit.' This is the alternative they want to bring us to—either an infallible Church, whose teaching is to be subject to no criticism and no correction, or else no Church teaching at all, each individual taking the Bible, and getting from it, by his own arbitrary interpretation, any system of doctrine he can. Reducing us to this alternative, they have no difficulty in showing that the latter method inevitably leads to a variety of discordant error; and they conclude we are forced to fall back on the other.

But in what subject in the world is it dreamed that we have got to choose between having infallible teachers, or else having no teacher at all? God has made the world so that we cannot do without teachers. We come into the world as ignorant as we are helpless: not only dependent on the care of others for food and warmth, without which neglected infancy must perish, but dependent on the instruction of others for our most elementary knowledge. The most original dis-

coverer that ever lived owed the great bulk of his knowledge to the teaching of others, and the amount of knowledge which he has added to the common stock bears an infinitesimally small proportion to that which he inherited. To think of being independent of the teaching of others, is as idle as to think of being independent of the atmosphere which surrounds us. Roman Catholic advocates can show, with perfect truth, that anyone who imagines he is drawing his system of doctrine all by himself from the Bible alone, really does nothing of the kind. Of course, if a man reads the Bible in a translation, he cannot imagine that he is independent of help from others. In any case, the selection of books that make the volume was made for him by others; the reverence that he pays to its contents is due to instruction which he received in his boyhood; and, besides, it is undeniable that it is natural to us all to read the Bible in the light of the previous instruction we received in our youth. How else is it that the members of so many different sects each find in the Bible the doctrines they have been trained to expect to find there?

Human teaching, then, we cannot possibly do without in any subject whatever; but are our teachers infallible? I grant that, by children and ignorant persons, it is necessary that they should practically be regarded so. It is said that, when Dr. Busby showed Charles II. over Westminster School, he kept on his own hat, though the king was bareheaded, and explained to the monarch afterwards that he should lose all authority over his boys if they once found out that there was anyone in the kingdom greater than himself. Certain it is that boys will not respect a teacher if they find out that he is capable of making mistakes. And this frame of mind is the best for the pupil's progress. When our knowledge is scanty, it is more important that we should be receptive than critical; or rather, if we attempt to be critical, we cannot be properly receptive. In the earliest stages, then, of instruction, a student makes most progress if he gets a teacher in whom he can put faith, and accepts from him with docility all the information he is able to impart to him. But you know that

the teacher's infallibility is not real: it is only relative and temporary; and an advanced student, instead of respecting a man more, respects him less if he pretends that he is incapable of sometimes making a slip. It is a maxim with chess-players, if you meet a player who says he has never been beaten, to offer to give him the odds of the rook. And what is intended plainly is, that the delusion of invincibility can never grow up in the mind of anyone except one who has never met a strong antagonist. Just in the same way, the delusion of infallibility can never grow up except in the mind of one who only mixes with inferiors, and does not allow his opinions to be tested by independent criticism. And we may say the same of Churches as of individuals. An infallible Church does not mean a Church which makes no mistakes, but only one which will neither acknowledge its mistakes nor correct them.

With respect to the teaching of secular knowledge, Universities have a function in some sort corresponding to that which the Church has been divinely appointed to fulfil in the communication of religious knowledge. If I said that University teaching of the mathematical and physical sciences was not infallible, you would not suspect me of being so ungrateful as to wish to disparage that teaching to which I owe all my own knowledge of these subjects. You would not suppose that I wished our students to receive with hesitation and suspicion the lessons of their instructors. You would not suppose that I was myself in the least sceptical as to the substantial truth of what is taught in these lessons. And yet I could not help owning that University teaching may possibly include errors, and must be willing to admit correction. Why, I could name one point of astronomical science in which it has altered within my own experience. When I was taught the planetary theory, I was given a demonstration, which I accepted as conclusive, that the changes in the orbits of the planets caused by their mutual action were all of a periodic character, and could not overthrow the stability of the system. At present the contrary opinion prevails, and it is held that the solar system is not

constituted for eternal duration. In any case, no one can imagine that University teaching was infallible in those pre-Reformation days, when what was taught was the Ptolemaic system of astronomy. And yet it would be equally false to say that University teaching was even then of small value; for I suppose the great reformer, Newton, could have made none of his discoveries if it had not been for the knowledge his University had taught him.

Now, we have no right to assume as self-evident that the laws which govern the communication of religious knowledge must be utterly unlike those which regulate our acquirement of every other kind of knowledge. In every other department of knowledge we must assert the necessity of human teaching; we must own that one who will not condescend to learn must be content to be ignorant; we must hold that the learner must receive the teaching he gets with deference and submission; and yet we do not imagine that the teachers are infallible, and we maintain that the learner ought ultimately to arrive at a point when he is no longer dependent on the mere testimony of his instructors, but becomes competent to pass an independent judgment on the truth of the statements made to him.

Improvements are made in metaphysics, political economy, and other sciences, not by persons who have thought out the whole subject for themselves, without help from others, but by those who, having been well instructed in what has been done already, then, by their own thought and study, correct the mistakes of their predecessors—even of the very teachers from whom they have themselves learned. In fact, the whole progress of the human race depends on the two things—human teaching, and teaching which will submit to correction. If there was no teaching there would be no progress, for each generation would start where its predecessor did, and there would be no reason why one should be more successful than another; and obviously there would be no progress if one generation was not permitted to improve on another. What actually happens is, that the new generation, rapidly learning from its predecessors, starts where they ended and is enabled

to advance further and to start the next generation on still more favourable terms.

There need be no difficulty now in coming to an agreement, that the divinely-appointed methods for man's acquirement of secular and of religious knowledge are not so very dissimilar. On the one hand, the finality and perfection of Church teaching—which was the doctrine of the older school of Roman Catholic advocates—is quite abandoned in the modern theory of development which has now become fashionable. That theory acknowledges that the teaching of the Church may be imperfect and incomplete; and though it is too polite to call it erroneous, the practical line of distinction between error and imperfection is a fine one and difficult to draw, as I could easily show by examples, if it were not that they would lead me too far from my subject. On the other hand we, for our part, are quite ready to admit that God did not intend us, in religious matters any more than in any other, to dispense with the instruction of others. We do not imagine that God meant each man to learn his religion from the Bible without getting help from anybody else. We freely confess that we need not only the Bible, but human instruction in it. And this need, we hold, was foreseen and provided for by the founder of our religion. He formed His followers into a community, each member of which was to be benefited by the good offices of the rest, and who, in particular, were to build up one another in their most holy Faith. More than this, He appointed a special order of men whose special duty it is to teach and to impress on the minds of the people the great doctrines of the Faith. In the institution of His Church, Christ has provided for the instruction of those who, either from youth or lack of time or of knowledge, might be unable or unlikely to study His Word for themselves.

Let me just remind you of the stock topics of declamation of Roman Catholics on the theme that Christ intended us to learn His religion, not from the Bible but from the Church. The first Christians, they tell us, did not learn their religion from books. There were flourishing Churches before any Book of the New Testament was written. The first Christians

were taught by the living voice of apostles and evangelists and preachers. Since their time thousands upon thousands of good men have gone to heaven in ignorance of the Bible; for, before printing was discovered, books were scarce and the power of reading them uncommon. Even in our own time the illiterate are numerous; yet who will venture to deny that many, ignorant of the knowledge of this world, may be possessed of the knowledge that maketh wise unto salvation? All these have learned their religion from the Church, not the Bible. When those who can read take up the Bible, they find it is not a book adapted for teaching our religion to those who do not know it already. The writers of the New Testament were all addressing men who had been previously instructed orally: and an acquaintance with the doctrines of the Gospel on the part of the reader is therefore assumed. The Bible itself contains no systematic statement of doctrine, no examples of the catechetical instruction given to the early converts. Of many most important doctrines you do not find the proof on the very surface of the Bible: you have to study the Scripture attentively to find it out; and it may well be doubted whether, in some cases, you would have ever found it if the Church had not pointed it out to you.

All this (to which much more of the same kind might be added) would be very difficult to answer, if we imagined it was any part of Christ's scheme to make us independent of the good offices of our fellow-men in learning our religion; but it goes idly by us who cheerfully acknowledge that Christ foresaw our need of human instruction, and provided for it, not only by the ordinary dispensations of His Providence, but by the institution of His Church, whose special duty it is to preserve His truth and proclaim it to the world. I need scarcely say how well this duty has been performed; how fully the Church provided, in her formularies and by the labour of her ministers, for the instruction of those who might be either unwilling or unable to obtain it otherwise. The illiterate may, through her, learn those truths which make wise unto salvation; the careless may have them forced on their attention: even the most learned have, by her means, their

study of God's Word aided to a greater degree than they are, perhaps, themselves aware of. Ever since the Church was founded, the work she has done in upholding the truth has been such, that the words 'pillar and ground of the truth' are not too strong to express the services she has rendered. She has preserved the Scriptures, and borne witness to their authority; she has, by her public reading, forced her members to become acquainted with them; she has embodied some of their most important doctrines in creeds which she has taught to her members. Even in the times when her teaching was mixed with most error she preserved the means of its correction. There was no new revelation of Divine truth made at the Reformation: it was by means of the Bible, which the Church had never ceased to honour, and through the instrumentality of regular clergy of the Church, and by reviving the memory of lessons taught by some of its most eminent teachers in former days, that the Reformation was brought about.

Nor do I hesitate to acknowledge the services rendered by the Church in the interpretation of Scripture. We need not hesitate to grant, in the case of the Bible, what we should grant in the case of any profane author. Were the object of our study an ordinary classical writer, an interpreter who, devoid of all sobriety of judgment, should scorn to study the opinions of the wise and learned men who had preceded him would be likely to arrive at conclusions more startling for their novelty than valuable for their correctness. Again, if the subject of our study were the opinions of a heathen philosopher, we should not refuse to consider the question, what was supposed to be his doctrine by the school which he founded? not that we should suppose their tradition to be more trustworthy authority as to the doctrines of their master than his own written statements. We might think it more likely than not, that a succession of ingenious men would add something of their own to what had been originally committed to them; and yet we should not think it right to refuse to listen to the tradition of the school as to the doctrine of its founder—to listen with attention, though not with blind acquiescence.

But, when every concession to the authority of the Church and to the services she has rendered has been made, we come very far short of teaching her infallibility. A town clock is of excellent use in publicly making known with authority the correct time—making it known to many who, perhaps, at no time, and certainly not at all times, would find it convenient or even possible to verify its correctness for themselves. And yet it is clear, that one who maintained the great desirability of having such a clock, and believed it to be of great use to the neighbourhood, would not be in the least inconsistent if he also maintained that it was possible for the clock to go astray, and if, on that account, he inculcated the necessity of frequently comparing it with, and regulating it by, the dial which receives its light from heaven. And if we desired to remove an error which had accumulated during a long season of neglect, it would be very unfair to represent us as wishing to silence the clock, or else as wishing to allow every townsman to get up and push the hands back or forward as he pleased.

In sum, then, I maintain that it is the office of the Church to teach: but that it is her duty to do so, not by making assertion merely, but by offering proofs; and, again, that while it is the duty of the individual Christian to receive with deference the teaching of the Church, it is his duty also not listlessly to acquiesce in her statements but to satisfy himself of the validity of her proofs.

I said, in a former Lecture, that the true analogy to the relation between a Christian teacher and his pupils is not that between a physician and his patients, but rather that between a physician and the class of students whom he is teaching medical science. A simple test will show that this was the view practically taken by the early Fathers. We never hear the captain of a ship going among the passengers and imploring them to study the charts, and not take his word that they are in the right course, but convince themselves of their true position. A physician does not exhort his patients to study their own case out of medical books; on the contrary, he would be sorry to see them perplexing themselves with a

study which could do them no good, but, on the contrary, might stand in the way of their obediently following his directions. But exhortation to study, of this kind, you will hear from a medical lecturer to the students whom he is teaching the profession. He will frankly tell them the reasons for the course of treatment which he advises; he will not ask them to receive anything merely on his authority; he will give them references to the best authors who have written on the same subject. He talks in this way to his class—never to the patients on whom he practises; so, in like manner, it would be the duty of the rulers of an infallible Church to exhort the people to receive their doctrines without question; but not to exhort them to examine the grounds on which the doctrine was established.

If, in fact, the Church be infallible, it is impossible to understand why the Bible was given. It cannot be of much use in making men wise unto salvation, for that the Church is supposed to do already. But it may be used by the ignorant and unstable to pervert it to their own destruction. If a Christian, reading the Bible for himself, puts upon it the interpretation which the Church puts upon it, he is still no better off than if he had never looked at it, and had contented himself with the same lessons as taught by the Church; but if he puts upon it a different interpretation from that of the Church (and if the Church be infallible, her interpretation is right and every other wrong), then he is deeply injured by having been allowed to examine for himself. Thus, if the Church be infallible, Bible reading is all risk and no gain. And so, in modern times the Church of Rome has always discouraged the reading of the Scriptures by her people; and if her theory be right, she has done so consistently and wisely. And therefore I say it is a proof that this theory was not held in ancient times, when we find that the early Fathers had no such scruples, but incessantly urged on their congregations the duty of searching the Scriptures for themselves.

I will take one Father as an example—St. Chrysostom; and there is no unfairness in my choosing him, for I do so only on account of his eloquence and vigour. You will find

the same sentiments, though perhaps less forcibly expressed, in every early Father. My quotations from him will serve a double purpose: both to prove the point on which I am immediately engaged—that at that time Christian teachers, instead of asking their people to receive their statements on the authority of an infallible Church, urged them to consult for themselves the sources of proof—and also to prepare the way for the next point in the controversy, namely, that the sources of proof used were exclusively the Holy Scriptures.

Now, on the first inspection of Chrysostom's works, you see that they were composed for people who had the Bible in their hands. The great bulk of his works consists of reports of his sermons; and, as a general rule, these sermons are not of the kind of which we have so many excellent examples at the present day: expositions of doctrine, or exhortations to holy living, with a Scripture text prefixed as a motto; but they are systematic expositions of Scripture itself. The preacher takes a book of the Bible and goes regularly through it, lecturing on it, verse by verse. Preaching of this kind would evidently have no interest except for men who had the Bible in their hands, and wished for a guide to enable them to understand it better. We have expositions of this kind in the works of several of the most eminent Fathers, both Greek and Latin. But indeed, in the case of the Latin Fathers, we require no elaborate proof that the Church then, so far from desiring to check the study of the Scriptures, placed them in the hands of the people, and encouraged them to read them. The existence of the Latin translation, dating from an early part of the second century, is evidence enough of this fact. For whose benefit can we suppose that that translation was made? The knowledge of Greek was then the accomplishment of every educated Roman. It would have been far harder then to find a Roman gentleman who did not understand Greek than it would be now to find an English gentleman who does not know either Latin or French. The Bible was translated into Latin, because the Latin Church, in those days, wished that not merely the wealthy, and the highly educated, but

that all her members should have access to the oracles of truth, and be able to consult them for themselves.

And now I proceed to my proof that the early Church did not merely permit her people to verify her teaching by the Scriptures—did not merely make the Bible accessible to them—but urged its use on them as a duty which it was inexcusable to neglect. One excuse, it may readily occur to you, the people of that day had which Christians have not now. Before printing was invented you would think that manuscripts must have been scarce and expensive, and the study of the Bible scarce practicable for ordinary Christians. But when you hear how Chrysostom deals with that excuse, you will find that, in this case, as in most others, demand produced supply, and that, in the ages when the Bible was valued, copies of it could be obtained without unreasonable sacrifice, and that it was only when the Scriptures ceased to be studied that manuscripts became scarce, and therefore costly.

Speaking of excuses for not reading the Bible, Chrysostom says*: 'There is another excuse employed by persons of this indolent frame of mind, which is utterly devoid of reason, namely, that they have not a Bible. Now, as far as the wealthy are concerned, it would be ridiculous to spend words on such a pretext. But, as I believe many of our poorer brethren are in the habit of using it, I should be glad to ask them this question, Have they not everyone got complete and perfect the tools of their respective trades? Though hunger pinch them, though poverty afflict them, they will prefer to endure all hardships rather than part with any of the implements of their trade, and live by the sale of them. Many have chosen rather to borrow for the support of their families than give up the smallest of the tools of their trade. And very naturally; for they know that, if these be gone, their whole means of livelihood are lost. Now, just as the implements of their trade are the hammer or anvil or pincers,

* In the following extract I combine what Chrysostom says in two places where he goes over nearly the same ground, viz., in *St. Joan. Hom.* 10, vol. viii. p. 63, and *De Lazar. Concio* 3, vol. i. p. 736.

exactly so the implements of our profession are the books of the Apostles and prophets and all the Scriptures composed by Divine inspiration, and very full of profit. As with their implements they fashion whatever vessels they take in hands, so we with ours labour at our own souls, and correct what is injured, and repair what is worn out. Is it not a shame, then, if, when the tools of this world's trades are concerned, you make no excuse of poverty, but take care that no impediment shall interfere with your retaining them, here, where such unspeakable benefits are to be reaped, you whine about your want of leisure and your poverty?

'But, at any rate,' he proceeds, 'the very poorest of you, if he attends to the continual reading of the Scriptures that takes place here, need not be ignorant of anything that the Scriptures contain. You will say this is impossible. If it is, I will tell you why it is impossible. It is because many of you do not attend to the reading that takes place here; you come here for form's sake, and then straightway go home; and some who remain are not much the better than those who go away, being present with us only in the body, not in the spirit.'

But there is another reason which Roman Catholics give now for keeping back the Scriptures from common use, namely, that they are too difficult for the unlearned to understand. You shall hear how St. Chrysostom dealt with that excuse when his people tendered it as a reason why they did not read the Bible.

'It is impossible for you to be alike ignorant of all; for it was for this reason that the grace of the Spirit appointed that publicans and fishermen, tentmakers and shepherds and goatherds, and unlearned and ignorant men, should compose these books, that none of the unlearned might be able to have recourse to this excuse; that the words then spoken might be intelligible to all; that even the mechanic, and the servant, and the widow-woman, and the most unlearned of all mankind might receive profit and improvement from what they should hear. For it was not for vainglory, like the heathen, but for the salvation of the hearers, that these authors were

counted worthy of the grace of the Spirit to compose these writings. For the heathen philosophers, not seeking the common welfare, but their own glory, if ever they did say anything useful, concealed it, as it were, in a dark mist. But the Apostles and prophets did quite the reverse; for what proceeded from them they set before all men plain and clear, as being the common teachers of the world, that each individual might be able, even of himself, to learn the sense of what they said from the mere reading.

'And who is there that does not understand plainly the whole of the Gospels? Who that hears "Blessed are the meek," "Blessed are the merciful," "Blessed are the pure in heart," and so forth, needs a teacher in order to comprehend any of those sayings? And as for the accounts of miracles and wonderful works and historical facts, are they not plain and intelligible to any common person? This is but pretext and excuse and a cloke for laziness.

'You do not understand the contents; and how will you ever be able to understand them if you do not study them? Take the book in your hands; read the entire history; and, when you have secured a knowledge of what is simple, come to the obscure and hard parts over and over again. And if you cannot by constant reading make out what is said, go to some person wiser than yourself: go to a teacher, communicate with him about the thing spoken of; show a strong interest in the matter; and if God see you displaying so much anxiety, He will not despise your watchfulness and earnestness; but if no man teach you what you seek for, He Himself will surely reveal it.

'Remember the eunuch of the Queen of the Ethiopians, who, though a barbarian by birth, and pressed by innumerable cares, and surrounded on all sides by things to occupy his attention, aye, *and unable, moreover, to understand what he was reading*, was reading, nevertheless, as he sat in his chariot. And if he showed such diligence on the road, consider what he must have done when staying at home. If he could not endure to let the time of his journey pass without reading, how much more would he attend to it when sitting

in his house? If, when he understood nothing of what he was reading, he still could not give up reading, much less would he after he had learned. For, in proof that he did not understand what he was reading, hear what Philip saith unto him: "Understandest thou what thou readest?" And he, upon hearing this, did not blush nor feel ashamed, but confessed his ignorance, and says: "How can I, unless some man should guide me?" Since, then, when he had not a guide, he was occupied even so in reading, he therefore speedily met with one to take him by the hand. God saw his earnestness, accepted his diligence, and straightway sent him a teacher.

'But there is no Philip here now. Aye, but the Spirit that influenced Philip is here. Let us not trifle, beloved, with our salvation. All these things were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come. Great is the security against sin which the reading of the Scriptures furnishes. Great is the precipice and deep the gulf that opens before ignorance of the Scriptures. It is downright abandonment of salvation to be ignorant of the Divine laws. It is this that has caused heresies: it is this that has led to profligate living: it is this that has turned things upside down; for it is impossible for anyone to come off without profit who constantly enjoys such reading with intelligence.'

I dare say that will strike you as good Protestant preaching, and you will be curious to hear what Roman Catholic advocates have to say in reply. Well, what they answer is, that Chrysostom only recommends what they call the ascetic use of the Scriptures, or, as we should say, their use for practical edification and instruction of life. I readily grant that this was the object Chrysostom appears to have had primarily in view in most of the sermons I have quoted, and I will, into the bargain, throw in the concession that Chrysostom would have been very sorry if his hearers had put any heretical meaning on what they read. But all this is beside the question we are considering, namely, Was the ancient Church afraid of their laity reading the Bible, or did

they not, on the contrary, recommend and urge them to read it? Suppose the question was whether calomel ought to be prescribed in a certain disease, and that a doctor who thought its use highly dangerous was pressed with the example of some great authority who had always prescribed it. Suppose, after denying this for some time, he had prescription after prescription shown to him, in which calomel had been employed, what would you think of the answer, 'Oh, he only prescribed calomel for its purgative properties; he did not intend the drug to operate in any other way'? Surely, it is common sense that, if you administer a drug, you cannot prevent it from exercising all its properties. If you let people read the Bible, you cannot prevent them from reflecting on what they read. Suppose, for an example, a Roman Catholic reads the Bible; how can you be sure that he will not take notice himself, or have it pointed out to him, that, whereas Pius IX. could not write a single Encyclical in which the name of the Virgin Mary did not occupy a prominent place, we have in the Bible twenty-one Apostolic letters, and her name does not occur in one of them? The Church of Rome has very good reason to discourage Bible reading by their people; for some of them are very likely to be struck by the fact that the system of the New Testament is very unlike that of modern Romanism. The ancient Church had no such fear. They never desired to teach anything that was not in the Bible; and so they were not afraid of the people discovering contradictions between the Bible and their teaching.

Now, I do not want any quotations I may read to you to mislead you into thinking that the Fathers of the fourth century were English Protestants of the nineteenth. I suppose there is not one of them to whose opinions on all points we should like to pledge ourselves. But such quotations as I have read show that they thoroughly agree with us on fundamental principles. Where they differ from us they differ as men do who, starting from the same principles, work them out in some respects differently. In such a case there is hope of agreement, if each revise carefully the pro-

cess of deduction from the principles held in common. But our conclusions differ from those of the Church of Rome, because we start from different principles, and pursue a different method. The difference will be the subject of the next Lecture.*

* I did not trouble myself to give formal proof of the discouragement of Bible reading by the modern Church of Rome, because I considered that, as I have said above, if her theory be true, her practice is quite right. But as her advocates are now often apt to be ashamed of this practice, I copy the conditions under which, according to the fourth Rule of the Congregation of the Index of Prohibited Works, the exceptional favour of being allowed to read the Bible may be granted :—'Since it is manifest by experience that if the Holy Bible in the vulgar tongue be suffered to be read everywhere without distinction, more evil than good arises, let the judgment of the bishop or inquisitor be abided by in this respect; so that, after consulting with the parish priest or the confessor, they may grant permission to read translations of the Scriptures made by Catholic writers, to those whom they understand to be able to receive no harm, but an increase of faith and piety from such reading: which faculty let them have in writing. But whosoever shall presume to read these Bibles, or have them in possession without such faculty, shall not be capable of receiving absolution of their sins, unless they have first given up the Bibles to the ordinary.'—See Littledale's *Plain Reasons*, p. 90. But it is needless to produce documentary evidence to anyone who knows the small circulation of the Scriptures in Roman Catholic countries; and, even in this country, the small knowledge of the Bible possessed by Roman Catholics in other respects well educated.

VIII.

THE CHURCH'S SOURCES OF PROOF.

IF we admit it as established that the Church is bound to give proofs of her doctrines, the next point in the controversy is what sources of proof are admissible. I think it was Dr. Hawkins, the late Provost of Oriel, who summed up our doctrine on this subject in the formula, The Church to teach, the Scriptures to prove.

The Church of England, in her Sixth Article, has laid down the principle of her method in the assertion that 'Holy Scriptures contain all things necessary to salvation,' so that whatever is incapable of Scripture proof, even if it may happen to be true, is not to be required of any man to be believed *as an article of faith*. A profession of belief in this principle of the sufficiency of Scripture is one of the pledges which our Church requires of every priest at his ordination. Nor is this principle merely asserted in one of the Articles; it runs through them all. Everything else, which might claim an independent authority, is made in the Articles to derive its authority from the Bible, and to be authoritative only so far as it agrees with the Bible. The most venerable of all traditions—the Creeds—are said (Art. VIII.) to be received only because capable of Scripture proof. Every particular Church, and General Councils of the Church, are said (Arts. XIX.–XXI.) to be liable to error; and their decisions are said to be binding only when it can be shown that they are taken out of Holy Scripture. Then, in the controversial Articles, one Roman doctrine after another is rejected as a human invention, because grounded upon no warrant of Holy Scripture. Thus you will see that the Sixth Article is not an isolated doctrine, but states the

principle of the method which our Church employs in the establishment of all her doctrines.

Now, the Council of Trent, at the outset of its proceedings, equally proclaimed the principle of its method, in order (as it said) 'that all men might understand in what order and method this Synod is about to proceed, and what testimonies and authorities it chiefly intends to use for the information of doctrine and the establishment of morals in the Church.' The actual words of the decree of the Council of Trent are easily accessible to you, and I shall expect you to know them; suffice it here to remind you that its principle is, that the saving truth, communicated by Christ and His Apostles, is contained in the written books and in *unwritten traditions*, and that equal piety and reverence is to be given to the books of the Bible and to those traditions.

As Bellarmine states the matter, the rule of faith is the Word of God; but that Word may be either written or unwritten. When we say unwritten, we do not mean that it is *nowhere* written, but only that it was not written down by its first announcers. To the first generation of Christians, the Gospel revelation was equally authoritative, whether it was announced to them by the Apostles' spoken words or by their written letters; and so to every succeeding generation it makes no difference whether the Word of God which comes to them be written or unwritten.

In passing, I may just point out the transparent fallacy in this oft-repeated argument. Of course, if you certainly know a communication to be the Word of God, your obligation to receive it is all the same, no matter how it came to you; but the manner in which it comes may make all the difference in the world, as to your power of knowing whether it be the Word of God or not. The early Christians, who received letters bearing the autographs of Peter or Paul, were not a whit more sure that they had got an apostolic communication than those who, with their own ears, heard the Apostles speak; no doubt, rather less so of the two; but it is surely perfectly ludicrous to argue that, because the Apostles' spoken words were as good a means of knowing their sentiments as their written

words, therefore what Leo XIII., after eighteen hundred years, tells us the Apostles taught is as good evidence to their doctrine as faithful transcripts of their own letters.

To return, however, the principle of the perfect equality of Scripture and tradition, as means of proving doctrine, runs through the decrees of the Council of Trent. Very frequently, indeed, when Scripture proof can be had, it is gladly cited; but tradition is freely used to supplement the silence of Scripture, or to interpret its obscurities. And indeed, in general, it is not easy to distinguish how much of the proof professes to be Scriptural, and how much traditional. Thus it was almost inevitable that the doctrine of the Articles of the Church of England and of the decrees of the Council of Trent should be different when the mode of judgment adopted by the two is so different; the one making Scripture alone its rule; the other, Scripture and tradition; and the latter, also, placing tradition on a perfect equality with Scripture, as a completely independent means of conveying a knowledge of what our Lord and His Apostles taught.

The question at issue is often stated in the form, What is the rule of faith: Scripture alone, or Scripture and tradition? On this form of expression I may have a remark to make by-and-by: what I want now to point out is, that in the Roman Catholic controversy this question about the rule of faith is altogether subordinate to the question as to the judge of controversies, or, in other words, the question as to the infallibility of the Church. The Church of England doctrine, as to the sufficiency of Scripture, has a real positive meaning to which there is nothing corresponding in the Roman doctrine about Scripture and tradition. Our Church accepts the obligation to give proof of her assertions, and she declares that Scripture is the source whence she draws her proofs. She declares that she does not consider that anything not contained in Scripture is necessary for salvation to be believed; and, accordingly, she does not make it a condition of communion with her to believe in any doctrine for which she cannot give Scripture proof. Now, the belief of a Roman Catholic does not rest on Scripture and tradition in the same

way that that of a Protestant does on Scripture: his belief rests on the authority of the Church; he does not think about tradition, except when he wants a well-sounding word in controversy with a Protestant. His Church expects to be believed on her bare word; she does not condescend to offer proofs. What she says about tradition will be found to have only a negative meaning, namely, that her doctrines are not to be rejected because they are not to be found in Scripture, inasmuch as she has other ways of coming by them; but you would be grossly mistaken if you imagined that she meant to offer you any historical proof by uninspired testimony for the Apostolic origin of doctrines which are not to be found in Scripture. If that Church condescends to offer proofs of her doctrines, she claims to be the sole judge whether what she offers are proofs or not. If she presents a Scripture proof, she claims to be the sole interpreter of Scripture; and she requires you to believe, on her word, not only that the doctrine in question is true, but also that it is taught in the passage of Scripture which she alleges in support of it. Thus you see that the so-called Scripture proof is not a foundation on which your faith is to rest, but a new load to be laid on your faith. And it is just the same when she alleges tradition. If she asserts that she has received a doctrine by tradition, you are bound to believe that the doctrine has been continuously held in the Church from the first, even though there may not be a particle of historic evidence to justify the assertion.

In the same session of the Council of Trent in which was passed the decree setting tradition on a level with Scripture, it was also ordained that no one, leaning on his own understanding, shall dare, wresting Scripture to his own sense, to interpret it contrary to that sense which has been and is held by the Holy Mother Church, whose province it is to judge concerning the true sense and interpretation of Scripture, or even contrary to the unanimous consent of the Fathers. Accordingly, the Creed of Pius IV. requires all who subscribe it to promise: 'I admit Holy Scripture according to that sense which has been and is held by Holy Mother Church, whose province it is to judge of the true sense and interpretation of

Scripture'; and, further, to say: 'Nor will I ever receive or interpret it except according to the unanimous consent of the Fathers.' The latter clause is a monstrous distortion of the words of the Council of Trent, and, if understood literally, amounts to a promise not to interpret Scripture at all, since, in the vast majority of cases where difference of opinion is possible, anyone who waits to interpret until he gets a unanimous consent of the Fathers to guide him may wait till Doomsday. The Vatican Council, the other day, in order to prevent misunderstanding of the meaning of this decree of Trent, renewed it in nearly the same words as those of the former Council.

If you look through the decrees of the Council of Trent, you will find illustrations in plenty of the use made of the Church's power of interpretation in finding Scripture proof not discoverable by man's unassisted powers. Thus, the decree concerning Extreme Unction recites the well-known words from the Epistle of James, and then adds: 'By which words (as the Church has learned from Apostolic tradition) the Apostle teaches the matter, the form, the proper minister, and the effect of the Sacrament. For the Church has understood that the matter is oil blessed by the bishop; that the form is those words, "per istam unctionem,"' etc.; and so on. Here we have a commentary of which there is not a trace in the text; and in this way evidently any passage of Scripture could be made to say anything the Church was pleased it should say.

I do not think any other proof is necessary of the modernness of the Roman rule of faith than the very complicated form which it assumes. I quote again from Milner's *End of Controversy* what, after rejecting the two fallacious rules of faith, he puts forward as the true rule, namely, 'the Word of God at large, whether written in the Bible or handed down from the Apostles in continual succession by the Catholic Church, and as it is understood and explained by the Church'; or, to speak more accurately, he says: 'Besides their rule of faith, which is Scripture and tradition, Catholics acknowledge an unerring judge of controversy, or sure guide

in all matters relating to religion, namely, the Church.' Now, if Christians had begun with the notion that they had an infallible guide in the Church, they never would have said anything about Scripture or tradition. And this will test for us a second time whether the relation between the Church teachers and their flocks is fitly paralleled by that between a barrister and his clients, or between a physician and his patients. A sick man, when asked what advice he is using in order to get well, does not answer: Medical literature, as contained in such-and-such books, together with the instructions given orally in the Dublin Medical Schools, the whole as interpreted to me by Dr. So-and-so. A litigant does not tell us that he trusts for the conduct of his lawsuit to the statutes at large, together with the common law, as ascertained by the decisions of several successive judges, the whole as interpreted to him by such-and-such a barrister. In those cases we do not dream of going behind the barrister or physician to whose skill we commit ourselves, and we do not bestow a thought on the sources of his information. And so, if Christians had originally trusted to the Church as an infallible guide, they would never have talked about Scripture or tradition. It would have been enough for them to know that the Church had told them what to believe: whether she derived her knowledge from Scripture, or from tradition, or from immediate inspiration, would not have mattered to them in the slightest degree. But the true explanation why Roman Catholic controversialists state their rule of faith in this complicated form is, that Christians began by taking Scripture as their guide, and then, when practices were found current which could not be defended out of the Bible, tradition was invoked to supplement the deficiencies of Scripture. Last of all, when no proof could be made out either from Scripture or antiquity for Roman Catholic doctrines and practices, the authority of the Church was introduced to silence all objections. But still there was not courage to rest the fabric of belief on this modern foundation solely, and so the venerable names of Scripture and antiquity were still appealed to.

But, indeed, the theory that tradition is a rule of faith is

quite untenable unless it be supplemented by the theory of the infallibility of the Church; for tradition is a rule which it is quite impossible for the individual to apply. There is no difficulty in an individual using Scripture as his rule of faith; for he can learn without much difficulty what the statements of the Bible on any subject are, and on most subjects these statements are easy to be understood. But if it were certain that Apostolic traditions independent of the Bible existed, it is next to impossible for the individual to find them with any certainty. If he has to search for them in the writings of Fathers, the canons of Councils, the decrees of Popes, the magnitude of the mass in which he has to search is enough to deter him from making the attempt.

Indeed, until our own time, the task would have been impossible. The Abbé Migne, in the prospectus to his edition of the Fathers, tells us, in capital letters, that, out of the innumerable works which constitute THE CATHOLIC TRADITION, he has formed one unique and admirable work, the materials which he had to gather being often fragments and small works without number, scattered here and there, and some of them unedited, drawn from books and manuscripts belonging to all places, all ages and languages, and now for the first time united in his library. It is certainly a great blessing to have the Catholic tradition presented in a compact and compendious form. And what is the size of this convenient compilation? The Latin Fathers form two hundred and twenty-two thick volumes; the Greek, one hundred and sixty-seven. But this is only Fathers: if you want the proceedings of Councils, the decrees of Popes, &c., you must search for them elsewhere. And then, when we search for Apostolical traditions in the writings of the Fathers, there is nothing to mark their Apostolic origin. We have no certain means, by our own ingenuity, of distinguishing true from false traditions: not one of the Fathers is recognized as singly a trustworthy guide: every one of them is admitted to have held *some* views which cannot be safely followed. Thus, the mere addition of tradition to the rule of faith makes it impossible for the individual to employ that

rule; and the Romish doctrine about the rule of faith would be unintelligible unless it were supplemented by her doctrine concerning the infallibility of the Church, which, by her unerring instinct, is supposed to have the power of distinguishing true from false traditions, and which reports the results she arrives at for the instruction of the people. Thus you see it is quite a delusion to represent the system of the Roman Church as resting on trustworthy tradition. We are not permitted to apply a historical test to her teaching: on the contrary, the teaching of the Church of the present day is made the test of traditions. If any sayings of ancient writers are brought forward, as contravening that teaching, they are set aside as false traditions.

It would seem, then, that if I have already refuted the notion that the Church of Rome is infallible, I need hardly say anything about tradition. There is, however, just this question of fact to be settled: our Church accepts the condition of having to give proof of her doctrines; it is owned on all hands that the New Testament is a trustworthy source of information as to the teaching of our Lord and His Apostles. The question is, Is there any trustworthy source *besides*? Now, I am willing to dismiss all *a priori* discussions, whether it is likely that God would commit the keeping of anything essential to our salvation to a vehicle so insecure, and so liable to be corrupted, as tradition; for it is dangerous to measure God's acts by our *a priori* notions what He was likely to do. And yet, the force of this argument is felt by Romanists themselves, who would not rely on a source of information so utterly precarious as tradition, if they did not suppose that they had a means of removing its insecurity in the Church, which, by its infallible instinct, discriminates true from false traditions. So, when the dream of infallibility is given up, tradition is reduced to its own uncertainty.

But, as I say, I dismiss all *a priori* arguments, neither shall I bring forward the statements of Scripture which bear witness to its own sufficiency, and which give us reason to believe that he who studies it in prayer for the Holy Spirit's guidance will find in its pages all things necessary for his sal-

vation. Such texts do not suffice to give us a logical victory over our opponents. We cannot speak too highly of the excellence of any one book of Scripture: I dare say that the Gospel of St. John alone contains all things needful for salvation; yet that does not prove that other inspired books were not written. Several of the texts that are cited to prove the sufficiency of Scripture primarily relate to the Old Testament; yet, excellent as that was, God gave the New besides; and, in like manner, if any New Testament text be cited, it may be asked, was the Canon closed at the time that text was written; if not, such a text does not prove that God may not have given a further revelation, or that that further revelation may not have been handed down by tradition.

I think it much better, then, instead of running away from this ghost of tradition which Roman Catholic controversialists dress up to frighten us with, to walk up to it, and pull it to pieces, when it is found to be a mere bogey. You say that you have other evidence as to the teaching of our Lord and His Apostles as trustworthy as the Books of the New Testament. Well, produce your evidence, and let us see what it is worth. When the question is looked at in this way it will be found that the appeal to tradition by Roman Catholics means no more than this: that there are doctrines taught by the Church of Rome which, it must be acknowledged, cannot be found in Scripture, and which she is unwilling to own that she invented, or to pretend that they were made known to her by a new revelation. It remains, then, that she must have received them by tradition. But the baselessness of this pretence appears when we come to look into the testimony of antiquity with respect to each of the peculiar doctrines of Romanism. For tradition is a thing which must be the purer the further we trace it back. The Church may get a new revelation, but cannot get a new tradition. We know, from the confession of Bishop Milner and others, that fifty years ago the Roman Church knew nothing certain, either by Scripture or tradition, as to whether or not the Virgin Mary was conceived without sin. Well, then, it is clear that if that Church has attained to certainty on this subject since, it was not by tradition she

attained it. In like manner, when Augustine hears the idea suggested that, as the sins of good men cause them suffering in this world, so they may also to a certain degree in the next, he says that he will not venture to say that nothing of the kind can occur, for perhaps it may.* Well, if the idea of purgatory had not got beyond a 'perhaps' at the beginning of the fifth century, we are safe in saying that it was not by tradition that the later Church arrived at certainty on the subject; for, if the Church had had any tradition in the time of Augustine, that great Father could not have helped knowing it. And so I might reason with respect to several other doctrines. Tradition, as it were, hangs by a chain from the Apostolic Church, and when one part of the chain snaps, down comes all that is below it. When once it is proved that the Church at any period was ignorant of a doctrine, there can be no pretence that the Church, at any subsequent period derived its knowledge of that doctrine *from Apostolic tradition*.

Indeed the Church of Rome finds this word 'tradition' so convenient, as accounting for the origin of doctrines, whose Apostolic descent can be proved in no other way, that she is unwilling to deprive herself of the power, involving though it does a contradiction in terms, of finding out new traditions. I quoted Bellarmine, as teaching that in calling one part of the Word of God 'unwritten,' he does not mean that it is nowhere written, but only that it was not written down by its first authors. Yet, if you ask how late are we to go down: when did some one or other of the Fathers complete the task of committing all these traditions to writing? you can get no distinct answer. The Roman authorities will not even pledge themselves that every tradition of the Church is committed to writing at this moment; and with good reason, for if they once closed the account it might be an inconvenient check to new developments.

If I am asked, then, why I do not appeal to traditions, independent of Scripture, as evidence of the true Christian doctrine, I am content to answer, Because I see no historical evidence that there are any such trustworthy traditions.

* *De Civ. Dei*, xxi. 26.

Roman Catholics say, You receive the New Testament on the authority of tradition; why do you not receive other things which come to us on the same authority? I answer, that I *am* willing to receive anything else that comes on the same authority. Produce me as strong testimony in favour of any doctrine not contained in Scripture, as that which proves the Books of the New Testament to have been written by the Apostles or by their contemporary fellow-labourers, and I will receive it. But, the fact is, the evidence on which we believe that the Epistle to the Galatians was written by St. Paul is far stronger than that on which we believe the *Æneid* to have been the work of Virgil; but, for any saying, or action, or doctrine of our Lord, not contained in the Bible, there really is not as much evidence as the editor of a respectable newspaper requires before he admits an announcement into his columns. Indeed, when we search for the early history of the Christian Church it is remarkable what a break occurs after the New Testament history, and before we come to other trustworthy records of much historical value. In the age which immediately succeeded the Apostles there were but few writers, and what remains to us of their compositions adds, I may say, nothing to what the New Testament has told us. When we come lower down the remains of antiquity increase, but there is a singular absence of trustworthy traditional information. I am disposed to account for this break by the rapid diffusion of the Gospel over distant countries; for distance of place is as great an obstacle to the propagation of a tradition as distance of time. But certain it is that the early Christian writers appear to have drawn their knowledge of the facts of the Gospel history solely from the New Testament, like ourselves, and to have been as much at a loss as we, when difficulties occurred, such as tradition might have been expected to explain.

For instance, as to a fact so little likely to be forgotten as the number of years our Saviour lived on earth, and the duration of His ministry, we find very opposite statements in early Christian writers, who we should have supposed had the means of being better informed. Clement of Alexandria

makes the whole duration of our Lord's ministry but one year;* and so some early writers understood the words 'the acceptable year of the Lord'; while Irenæus (II. xxii.) states, on the authority not merely of John viii. 57, but of persons who claimed to have received St. John's oral teaching, that our Saviour passed through all the stages of human life from infancy to old age. There is a like discrepancy as to a fact which one would think tradition might have preserved—the personal appearance of our Saviour.† Opposite opinions were held, but plainly, I think, held not on the evidence of traditional testimony, but on no better grounds than those on which we might ourselves discuss the question; the one side understanding literally the prophetical texts, 'He hath no form or comeliness, and when we shall see Him, there is no beauty that we should desire Him; His visage was marred more than any man, and His form more than the sons of men'; the other side, yielding to that natural feeling which still leads painters to give to the features of our Blessed Lord all of dignity and grace that they are capable of expressing. There are difficulties in the New Testament on which tradition might be expected to throw light, such as the double genealogies of St. Matthew and St. Luke, and yet, it gives no information worthy of reliance.‡ Such a question as whether St. Matthew wrote in Hebrew or Greek appears to be not absolutely settled by tradition.§ Again, some difficulties of textual criticism would be solved if we could assume that more editions of the Gospel than one were published. But no uninspired writer is early enough to know anything about the first publication of the Gospels.

Many like examples can be given. Hermas appears to

* *Strom.* I. 21, p. 407. See also v. 6, p. 658. Clement is followed by Origen (*De Princ.* IV. 5).

† On this subject see the interesting essay appended to Rigalt's Cyprian, *De Pulchritudine Corporis D. N. Jesu Christi.*

‡ At the beginning of the third century Africanus endeavoured to collect in Palestine traditions on the subject. Few traditions have stronger external claims to respect than his account of the matter (see Routh, *Rell. Sac.* II. 228), but I cannot feel that any confidence can be placed in it.

§ See my *Introduction to the New Testament*, Lect. x.

have been recognized as a prophet at Rome, and his book, called 'The Shepherd,' was admitted to the public reading of many Churches. Yet even in Rome itself in less than a hundred years it was quite forgotten who this Hermas was, while in foreign Churches the wildest guesses were made on the subject. The Roman Church does not even give a unanimous account as to the names and order of its first bishops. The Epistle of Clement gained much celebrity; but what order this Clement held in the series of Roman bishops is disputed to this day. The subscriptions to St. Paul's epistles are not earlier than the fourth century; but we might naturally think that Euthalius, to whom they are ascribed, would embody in them all the earlier traditions which he could collect; yet these subscriptions are, in one or two cases, quite erroneous, and are in no case regarded as of any authority. In the third century learned men appear to have been in the same position as ourselves when called on to reconcile the prevalent tradition, that Paul wrote the Epistle to the Hebrews with the absence of his name and the difference of style from his acknowledged letters. They appear to have tried to solve the question by sagacious conjecture, but to have been quite without historical testimony. The curiosity of Christians eagerly thirsted for more information about the deeds and sayings of our Lord than the New Testament supplies; and the want so generally felt compilers of Apocryphal Gospels tried to satisfy. Some of them are very early, and, if there had been any additional facts available, they would, no doubt, have worked them into their productions. But the fictitious character of these Gospels is betrayed by their entire unlikeness to the genuine histories of our Saviour; nor do I suppose that there is now any learned man who attaches the least credence to the legends which they contain. There is no saying of our Lord, outside of the New Testament, for which there is more respectable testimony, than for that saying about the Millennium which I quoted from Papias last Term,* and which is calculated to destroy all faith in uninspired tradition.

* Irenæus, v. 33. See my *Introduction to the New Testament*, p. 227.

The simple answer, then, to the question, why we do not use traditions as well as Scripture in the proof of Christian doctrine, is that we do not know of any trustworthy enough; and what we have seen of the failure of tradition proves to us that there were good reasons why God should have granted us in Scripture a more secure channel for conveying Christian truth. But if it is alleged that it can be established by uninspired testimony that any doctrine not contained in Scripture is part of the Christian scheme, let the evidence be produced, and we are willing to consider it. I need not discuss the abstract probability whether it is reasonable to expect that such testimony can be forthcoming, because I believe, as a matter of fact, that in no case has any such been produced.

IX.

THE RULE OF FAITH.

THE subject on which I lectured on the last day would very commonly be stated in the form, What is the rule of faith? Scripture alone, or Scripture and tradition? There are some ambiguities in the words used in this mode of statement to which I ought to call your attention. First, as to the words 'rule of faith,' I ought to mention that two or three very early Fathers* give the name 'regula fidei' or 'regula veritatis' to a profession of faith nearly identical with our Apostles' Creed, as forming the rule according to which Christians ought to shape their belief. Our Church, in the Eighth Article, does not ascribe to the Creeds any independent authority, but receives them merely because they can be proved from Scripture. Of course that does not mean that the Bible is our only source of knowledge for the truth of all the things stated in the Creeds. I suppose that, if a single book of the New Testament had never been written, it would still have been possible for us to know that the doctrine in attestation of which the first preachers of Christianity hazarded their lives was, that the Founder of their religion had died and was buried, and rose again the third day. No one who contends for the sufficiency of Scripture is concerned to deny that many of the things stated in the Bible are capable of historical proof independently of the Bible. Nor are we at all concerned to determine the historical question whether, in the earliest age of the Church, the doctrines contained in that profession of faith which converts made at their baptism

* Irenæus, *Haer.* I. ix., xxi.; Tertullian, *De Praescrip.* 13, *De Virgg. veland.* 1, &c.

might not have been known to many of them independently of Scripture. Obviously, if it were proved that the great leading facts of our religion, though contained in the Bible, might also be handed down independently of the Bible for a hundred years or two, this would not at all prove that a number of things for which no Scripture warrant can be found might also have been handed down for eighteen hundred years. However, I have thought it the simplest plan to avoid all cavil as to the use of the phrase, 'rule of faith,' and merely state the question of fact we have got to determine: Is there, besides the Scripture, any trustworthy source of information as to the teaching of our Lord and His Apostles?

It is more important to observe that there is an ambiguity about the word tradition. Bellarmine divides traditions into Divine, Apostolical, and Ecclesiastical. Divine traditions are things ordained by Christ Himself. Such, for example, he says, are the matter and form of the Sacraments, because that it is certain that Sacraments could only be instituted by Christ Himself. Apostolic traditions are things ordained or taught by the Apostles under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, and by them handed down to the Church. It is concerning these two that we have controversy with the Church of Rome. Nothing turns on the distinction between the two. We readily admit ourselves to be bound to receive anything that can be traced up to the inspired teaching of the Apostles; and we raise no question whether the Apostles were repeating something taught them by our Lord's own lips during the period when he walked on earth, or were speaking under the immediate inspiration of the Holy Ghost. In both cases we acknowledge their teaching to be alike binding on us. Our controversy is whether, if any doctrine *not* contained in Scripture be propounded as necessary to salvation, satisfactory proof can be given that it was so propounded by the Apostles. Of course there is a great deal that is true of which the Bible does not tell us anything; but we do not hold that belief in truth of this kind is necessary to salvation.

The traditions which Bellarmine places in the third class

are of quite a different kind. Ecclesiastical traditions are ancient customs of the Church, which, however instituted at first, have, by length of custom, the force of laws of the Church. Such traditions, says Bellarmine, are the observance of Easter and Whitsuntide, the custom of mixing water with the Eucharistic wine, the habit of making the sign of the Cross. Now, it is curious that, though in popular controversy tradition is commonly opposed to Scripture, the word tradition does not occur in our Sixth Article, which practically excludes Bellarmine's first two kinds of traditions, Divine and Apostolical, from holding a place on a level with Scripture in binding our faith. In the only place in our Articles in which the word 'tradition' occurs, namely, the Thirty-fourth Article, 'Of the Traditions of the Church,' it is used in the sense of what Bellarmine calls Ecclesiastical traditions. Concerning these last, except on the question of Roman supremacy, we have no controversy with the Church of Rome. Although we do not allow doctrines of faith to be taught except on the authority of Scripture, we do not require such authority for the institution of a rite or ceremony. We do not believe that the New Testament was intended as a code of ceremonial; and we allow each Church to order such matters as she finds most conducive to the edification of the people; and, as times and manners change, to alter such ceremonies again as she finds expedient, provided only that nothing is ordained contrary to the Word of God.

On this point there is very little room for controversy among Christians. No sect could consistently carry out the principle of having no Church rule without a Scripture text to authorize it; and, on the other hand, the Church of Rome herself most fully acknowledges the power of the Church, for reason which to her seems good, to alter Church rules of the most venerable antiquity. I need only remind you of her rule of withholding the cup from the laity, though she acknowledges that the Sacrament, on its first institution, was administered in both kinds, and that this mode of administration continued in the Church for many ages. It was necessary to point out to you this ambiguity in the word

'tradition,' because you will constantly find that, when passages of the Fathers are adduced which speak of traditions, the writers are not dreaming of any rule of faith distinct from Scripture, but only of ancient customs of the Church, as to the expedience, or, at any rate, the lawfulness, of retaining which we have no inclination to enter into dispute.

While speaking on this subject, I may give you a reference to an interesting list of early Church customs for which no Scripture authority can be given. It is in the beginning of Tertullian's treatise, *De Corona Militis*, and the list may be extended by means of the note to the Oxford translation of the passage. The occasion of it was that Tertullian—whose turn of mind led him, whenever a question was raised as to what was permissible to a Christian, to take what we may call a puritanically strict view—had pronounced it unlawful for Christians to wear a flower crown, as the heathens did, on occasions of rejoicing. It shows the feeling of the Church of the time on the sufficiency of Scripture that, whenever Tertullian puts forward any of these severe rules, he has always to meet the objection, Can you show from Scripture that what you condemn is wrong? On other occasions he makes some attempt to satisfy the demand. Here Scripture proof fails him, and he has to take his stand on the custom of the Church, which forbad the wearing of such wreaths; and this leads him to instance a number of practices which have no authority but Church usage. It is an argument *a fortiori* in favour of our rule of requiring Scripture proof for Divine or Apostolic traditions, that in the early Church such proof was demanded even for Ecclesiastical traditions.

There is another distinction worth bearing in mind when quotations from the Fathers are produced—that between tradition as signifying the 'res tradita' and the 'modus tradendi.' Every belief and custom which the Church of one age hands down to its successors is in one sense a tradition; and in many places the word 'tradition' is used as it is by St. Paul, so as not to determine anything as to the way in which the tradition comes—'Hold fast the traditions which you have received, whether by word or our epistle.' It is

evident that any passage of this kind is misapplied if it be supposed to indicate a preference of oral tradition over the written Word.

With these cautions we might be well content to allow the question concerning Scripture and tradition to be determined by tradition alone; for, if anything can be established by tradition, there is a clear and full tradition to prove that the Scriptures are a full and perfect rule of faith; that they contain the whole Word of God; and that what is outside of them need not be regarded. To go into the details of the proof would scarcely be suitable to a *viva voce* lecture; for there would be little profit in reading out a string of passages which I could not expect you to remember. I will, therefore, refer you to the second part of Taylor's *Dissuasive* for a complete catena of Fathers establishing by their consent this principle, which no Father denies. And I am sure that there is no Roman Catholic doctrine disputed by us for which anything like so complete a tradition can be cited. I merely give you, as a sample, the following from St. Basil.* 'Without doubt it is a most manifest fall from faith, and a most certain sign of pride, to introduce anything that is not written in the Scriptures, our blessed Saviour having said, "My sheep hear My voice, and the voice of strangers they will not hear"; and to detract from Scripture, or to add anything to the faith that is not there, is most manifestly forbidden by the Apostle saying, "If it be but a man's testament, no man addeth thereto."' In the same context St. Basil declares that he will only sparingly employ any words which, though they express the doctrine of Scripture, are not found in Scripture itself. I may remind you, in passing, how the dislike to employ a non-Scriptural phrase deterred many who were perfectly orthodox in doctrine from adopting the ὁμοούσιος of the Nicene Creed. In another treatise† on the duties of different stations of life, having given a section to the duties of Christian teachers, he comes to the duties of hearers, and the first duty he names is, 'Those who are instructed in the Scriptures ought to test the things that are

* *De Fide*, Garnier's Ed., ii. 313. † *Moralia*, Reg. 72, vol. ii., p. 428.

said by their teachers, and to receive what agrees with the Scriptures, and to reject what disagrees.' He establishes this caution by the texts, 'If thine eye offend thee,' &c.; 'A stranger they will not follow, but will flee from him; for they know not the voice of a stranger'; 'Though we or an angel from heaven preach any Gospel to you besides that ye have received, let him be anathema'—a text, I may observe, forcibly used for the same purpose by St. Augustine.* And lastly, St. Basil uses the text, 'Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.' Uneducated persons, who cannot read the Scriptures, are recommended by St. Basil to trust their teachers according as they see the fruits of the Spirit manifested in their life.

So much for an Eastern witness. For a Western I cannot take a better than St. Cyprian, because, as his controversy was with the Bishop of Rome, the quotation will also serve to show how little the supremacy or infallibility of the Roman See was acknowledged in the third century. Cyprian, as you no doubt know, opposed the then existing custom of the Church which acknowledged the validity of baptism conferred by heretics, contending that the claims of custom must give way to those of truth. He was resisted by Stephen, Bishop of Rome, who, in the vehemence of his opposition, transgressed all the bounds of charity, and proceeded so far as to excommunicate those who differed from him. Now, the question is, not who was right in that particular dispute, but what were the principles on which the Fathers of the Church then argued. Cyprian thus writes to another bishop,† 'I have sent you a copy of the answer which our brother Stephen has sent to our letter, on reading which you will mark the error of him who endeavours to maintain the cause of heretics against the Church of God; for, among other things, either insolent or irrelevant, or self-contradictory, which he has rashly and thoughtlessly written, he has added this: "if anyone come to us from any heresy whatever, let no innovation be made on the tradition that hands be laid on him unto repentance." I may interrupt my quotation to say, that it appears to me clear, from the other documents of this controversy, that

* *Cont. litt. Petiliani*, III. 6, vol. ix. 301. † *Ep.* 74, *Ad Pompeium.*

Stephen had put forward his succession from St. Peter, and had demanded that the traditional practice of the Roman Church in this matter should be accepted, as having been delivered to it by St. Peter and St. Paul. 'No innovation on the tradition,' cries St. Cyprian. 'Whence comes that tradition? Does it descend from the authority of our Lord and the *Gospels*? Does it come from the commands and *Epistles* of the Apostles? God testifies that we must do the things that are *written*, saying to Joshua, "the Book of the law shall not depart from thy mouth, but thou shalt meditate in it day and night, that thou mayest observe to do all that is written in it." Likewise, the Lord, when He sent His Apostles, commanded them to baptize all nations, and to teach them to observe whatsoever He commanded. If, therefore, it is commanded, either in the *Gospels*, or in the *Apostolic Epistles*, or in the *Acts*, that those coming from any heresy should not be baptized, but only hands laid on them, *then* this is a Divine tradition, and let it be observed; but if in these books heretics are called nothing but adversaries and anti-Christs; if we are told to avoid them as perverse and self-condemned, why should we not condemn those who, the Apostle witnesses, are self-condemned?' Plainly, Cyprian here maintains that the way to find out what traditions are genuine is not to take the word of the Bishop of Rome, but to search the Scriptures as the only trustworthy record of Apostolic tradition. As he says further on in the same letter, 'What do you do when the water in a conduit fails? You go back to the source.'

In this controversy the African bishops had extensive support in the East; in particular, the Churches of Asia Minor, who had been alienated from Rome by their quartodeciman practice, took part strongly against Stephen, and their leading bishop, Firmilian of Cappadocia, writing to Cyprian, rejects Stephen's authority in language more angry and contemptuous than Cyprian's. Dionysius of Alexandria interfered in the interests of peace. But what really silenced the controversy was the persecution which descended with equal weight on both parties, and gave alike to Stephen and to Cyprian

opportunity to witness, that, whatever their differences, the cause of Christ was dear to both.

On the question of heretical baptism we have, as often happens, Father opposed to Father, and the views of Cyprian are refuted by Augustine; but the very disagreement brings out the fact, that there is a point on which all the Fathers are agreed, namely, the infinite superiority of Scripture to every other source of proof. Cyprian's doctrine about heretical baptism was an innovation at the time, as we may easily gather from the stand he takes on Scripture against tradition; and, as you know, it was not ultimately adopted by the Church. But his arguments were most acceptable to the followers of Donatus, who, in their controversy with St. Augustine, pressed him continually with the authority of that martyr saint, whose credit everywhere in the Church was so great, but naturally more particularly so in Africa. Now, Augustine differed from Cyprian in not thinking Scripture proof to be necessary in order to show a custom to be Apostolical. He thought, on the contrary, that the existence in the Church, from time immemorial, of a custom the origin of which could not be traced to the decree of a Council, or in any other such way accounted for, afforded a reasonable presumption that the custom was Apostolical. However this may be, I agree with him in thinking that the usage of the Church was justification enough for not re-baptizing those who had received heretical baptism. And when he was pressed by Cyprian's authority he replied, 'You are ever throwing in our teeth Cyprian's opinions, Cyprian's letters, Cyprian's Council. Who knows not that the Canonical Scripture of the Old and New Testament is contained within certain limits, and that *its* authority is so far to be preferred to all later letters of bishops, that no question can be raised whether what is found therein be true and right? Whereas the letters of bishops written after the settling of the Canon may be checked by the wiser language of any writer who happens to have more knowledge of the matter in question, or by the weightier authority of other bishops, and the skill of learned men, or by Councils; and particular or provincial

Councils again must yield to the authority of General Councils gathered from the whole Christian world. Nay, earlier General Councils themselves may be corrected by later.'* And again, in graceful language, which gives due weight to the authority of Cyprian, while it refuses to set any uninspired authority on the level of Scripture; 'but, now, seeing that which thou recitest is not Canonical, with that liberty to which the Lord hath called me, I do not receive the opinion different from Scripture of that man whose praise I cannot reach, to whose great learning I do not compare my writings, whose genius I love, in whose spirit I delight, whose charity I admire, whose martyrdom I reverence.'†

I must not weary you with quotations; but you may take it as a general rule that there is not a Father who, if his own belief is demanded for something not contained in Scripture which he is not disposed to accept, will not reply in some such language as St. Jerome: 'This, because it has not authority from the Scriptures, is with the same easiness despised as approved.'‡ 'As we accept those things that are written, so we reject those things that are not written.'§ 'These things which they invent, as if by Apostolic tradition, without the authority of Scripture, the sword of God smites.'‖ You will see, then, that if we were at the desire of the Romish advocates to leave the Scriptures and resort to the Fathers of the early Church for a decision of our controversies, these very Fathers would send us back to the Scriptures as the only guide to truth, the only safeguard against heresy.

It is proper to mention the only set-off that I know of that can be made to the otherwise unanimous teaching of the Fathers on this subject—it is Tertullian's treatise on Prescription. And at first sight it might seem that this is opposed to our views, for the main point it is intended to establish is, that we ought not to argue with heretics out of the Scripture, but put them down by an appeal to antiquity or to the authority of the Church. And in reading this tract we recognize, with a little surprise, some of the arguments Roman Catholics are

* *De Bapt. Cont. Donatt.* II. 4, vol. ix., p. 98. † *Cont. Crescon.* II. 40, vol. ix., p. 430.
‡ *In Matth.* xxiii. 35. § *Adv. Helvid.* ‖ *In Aggaei Proph.* cap. i. 11.

in the habit of employing against us. Now, in the first place, I must observe, that it is a misrepresentation of the sentiments of the Fathers, as it would be of any set of men, when arguments which they have used in one controversy are applied to another which was not in their minds when they were writing. Very few people are such cautious disputants as not occasionally to use arguments which prove too much; which, though very effective for the immediate purpose to which they are applied, might on another occasion prove very inconvenient. Not unfrequently at the present day Roman Catholics and Protestants, arguing together, use arguments which an infidel might retort with effect against either; or, conversely, men arguing against infidels use principles which a Roman Catholic might be glad to have admitted.

Now, on looking into this treatise on Prescription, you will find that nothing could be further from the mind of its author than to inculcate a belief in any doctrine not contained in Scripture. Neither here nor elsewhere does Tertullian show a wish to do so. The doctrines which in this tract Tertullian desires to defend are the most elementary Articles of the Creed, and all lie on the very surface of the Bible. You will find that there was reason in Tertullian's assertion, that it was not possible to dispose of the heretics with whom he had to deal by Scripture arguments: for you can only argue with people on principles which you and they hold in common, and the Scriptures were not common ground between the Church and the heretics of the second century. The Gnostic heretics whom he had in view denied the most fundamental Articles of the Christian faith. Their theories made matter the root of all evil: consequently, they could not believe that the Supreme Being, whom they called the Good God, was the Creator of the world—a work which they attributed to some subordinate, or even hostile Being. This Being they took to be the God of the Jews, who in the Old Testament had claimed the work of creation as His own; consequently, they held that the Old Testament was contrary to the New, and that Jesus was not the Messiah of the Jewish prophets. They could not believe that Christ had assumed a material body,

that He had been really born, or really died, or that there would be any future resurrection of the body. Now you can well believe that it was labour lost to argue out of the Scriptures with people who held such views as these. You could tell them nothing as to the difference between their teaching and that of the Bible that they must not have known perfectly well before you spoke to them.

They were prepared, however, with different modes of meeting the difficulty. They generally claimed to be in the possession of secret traditions of our Lord or His Apostles; for it was in the Gnostic sects that the idea of supplementing or superseding Scripture by tradition first was conceived. They had a number of Gospels of their own containing these traditions, while they rejected some of the most inconvenient parts of our Canonical books. But one sect, the Valentinians, were content with the Church Canon, finding that the allegorical method of interpretation which prevailed in Egypt, the birthplace of that sect, might be used with as much success in eliciting the Gnostic tenets from the Bible, as it had been employed by orthodox interpreters in deriving the doctrines which they believed to be true. You can easily conceive that men who dealt in such arbitrary fashion with the Bible had no common ground on which the orthodox could battle with them by Scripture arguments. In order to refute the Gnostic pretence of secret traditions, the Churches took pains to establish their own connexion with the Apostles, so as to make it appear that if any such traditions there were, it must be the Churches which had the possession of them. It was with this object that we find pains first taken to trace the successions of bishops; for whatever opinion you may entertain as to the form of Church government in the primitive Church, this, at least, is indisputable; that at the beginning of the last quarter of the second century there were bishops everywhere, and no memory survived that any other form of government had ever existed. Several of the great Churches claimed to be able to give lists of their bishops reaching up to the Apostles' times, and so they conceived that they established their right against the

Gnostics to be regarded as the sole possessors of genuine Apostolic traditions. With this explanation you can better appreciate the line taken by Tertullian in his treatise on Prescription, a legal term with which Tertullian, as an advocate, was familiar, his object being to bar the right of these heretics to argue out of Scripture at all.

Tertullian begins by refuting the two principles, on one or other of which must rest the Gnostic claim to have a secret tradition unknown to the Church at large. This would imply either that the Apostles did not know the whole truth, or that, knowing it, they did not communicate it to those whom they taught. In disproving these two suppositions, Tertullian, at the same time, demolishes the modern theory of Development. Then complaining that no satisfactory result is arrived at by arguing out of Scripture with heretics, who either did not acknowledge the Books received by the Church, or who mutilated and corrupted them, or who distorted their meaning by perverse interpretation, he proposes a shorter method of dealing with them, namely, to deny their right to use the Scriptures at all. The Scriptures had been given, not to them, but to the Churches who agreed in doctrine with Tertullian. Consult any of the Churches to which the Apostolic letters had been written. If you are in Achaia, consult Corinth; if in Macedonia, consult the Church of Philippi; if in Italy, or, like those whom Tertullian addressed, in Africa, consult the neighbouring Church of Rome, and you will find all those Churches agree in maintaining the same doctrine. Now truth is uniform, but it is the very nature of error to be continually assuming new shapes. If the Churches had erred they would have erred after many different fashions. Whence, then, arises this surprising agreement in error? The single point that the same doctrine is maintained by so many different Churches, situate in distant quarters of the globe, affords a strong presumption of its truth. Where one and the same thing is found among many, this is not error but tradition. And lastly, truth came first, error afterwards: we cannot believe that the Gospel was for so many years wrongly preached, so many

thousands wrongly baptized, so many miracles wrongly wrought, so many martyrdoms wrongly crowned, and that all this time truth was waiting for Marcion or Valentinus to set her free.

Such is the argument of the treatise on Prescription.* It is an argument from tradition independent of Scripture; and if we had to own it to be a bad one, Tertullian would be neither the first nor the last who has defended a good cause by weak arguments. But I will not be deterred from saying, that I think the argument, on the whole, a good and successful one, even though Romanists do employ somewhat similar arguments against ourselves. For, first, as I said before, we may believe that tradition could successfully carry the knowledge of the facts stated in the Apostles' Creed through a century without believing that it could carry the doctrine of Pope Pius's Creed through nineteen. Tertullian uses the argument, Where was your religion before Marcion or Valentinus? and I think it a good one, even though Roman Catholics do ask us, Where was your religion before Martin Luther? If what Luther or Calvin taught was really as great a novelty in the history of Christianity, and as unlike what had been taught before as what Valentinus taught was when it appeared, we should do well in rejecting it. What we receive we accept, because we believe it to be, not new error, but old truth. And, lastly, the argument from the unity of different Churches, which Tertullian urged with so much force, loses all its power in the hands of Roman Catholics. That a number of different and widely separated Churches, each of which was, a century ago, in direct and independent communication with the Apostles, should now all agree in teaching the same doctrines, affords a strong presumption that those doctrines are Apostolic; but that a number of different Churches who are all in direct communication with the Bishop of Rome, and who are taught that they are bound to submit to him implicitly, and that it is a sin to reject anything which he teaches to them, that these should all agree in

* In this argument Tertullian is much indebted to Irenaeus. See, in particular, the beginning of his third book.

teaching the same doctrine proves no more than that the doctrine is Roman. In order that an argument from agreement of witnesses should have any force, it is absolutely necessary that the witnesses should be independent. If a number of manuscript copies, written by different persons from the same original, agree, that agreement furnishes a strong presumption of the correctness of their common reading; but that several copies of the same edition of a printed book agree proves nothing at all. Thus the tyranny of Rome cuts her off from the use of this topic of evidence to the truth of her teaching. If there are any remedies which are recognized as effectual by physicians of different countries, brought up in different schools, it may be presumed that such remedies really have the merits ascribed to them; but it proves nothing in favour of Holloway's pills, that those sold by different vendors, in different towns, turn out on analysis to be exactly the same. In short, the agreement of different Churches, in teaching the same doctrine, undoubtedly proves that this teaching must have had a common origin; but the question remains, whether that common origin was the teaching of the Apostles, or whether we can trace this concordant teaching to a common origin very much later than the Apostles. I have spent all this time on Tertullian's treatise, because I thought that fairness required me to dwell on what seemed to make against us, even though it be quite an exception to the general tenor of Patristical language and practice with regard to the controversial use of Scripture; while I have passed over in a summary way all that made for us, because it seemed superfluous to bring up one witness after another all to say the same thing.

X.

HERMENEUTICAL TRADITION.

SOMETHING must now be said as to a lower claim that has been made for tradition; it has been put forward by some, not as an independent source of information, but as an interpreter of Scripture. Modest as that claim sounds, it might easily be so used as to supersede Scripture altogether. If we had a guide who could only speak to us in a language we did not understand, the interpreter who translated for us his directions would be our real guide. In the reign of Charles the First there were some who professed readiness to obey the commands of the king, *as notified to them by Parliament;* but, practically, it amounted to exactly the same as refusing to obey the king, if Parliament were recognized as his only mouthpiece. Accordingly, it was one of Cardinal Newman's not least surprising feats of ingenuity, and yet in real truth not the most difficult, to show that, on the subject of the Sixth Article, the difference between the true meaning of the Church of England and the Church of Rome was more apparent than real. Writing to Dr. Pusey, he says: 'The opposing parties attach different meanings to the word "proof" in the controversy whether the whole faith is or is not contained in Scripture. Roman Catholics mean that not every Article is so contained there, that it may thence be legally proved, independently of the teaching and authority of tradition. But Anglicans mean that every Article is so contained there that it may thence be proved, provided that there be added the illustrations and compensations of tradition; and it is in this latter sense that I conceive that the Fathers also speak. I am sure, at least, that St. Athanasius

frequently adduces passages in proof of points in controversy which no one could see to be proofs unless Apostolic tradition were taken into account, first as suggesting, then as authoritatively ruling, their meaning. Thus you Anglicans do not deny that the whole is not in Scripture, in such sense that pure unaided logic can draw it from the Sacred Text, nor do Roman Catholics deny that the faith is in Scripture in an improper sense, that tradition is able to recognize it, and determine it there.'*

The opinions which Newman ascribes here to Anglicans may have been those of Dr. Pusey, whom he was addressing, but I am sure they were not those of the framers of our Article, nor do I believe they were those of the Fathers whom I have quoted. It is highly ingenious, but far from satisfactory, to oppose the practice of Athanasius to his theory. His theory was expressed in the words, 'The Holy and Inspired Scriptures are sufficient of themselves for the preaching of the Truth.'† 'These [canonical books] are the fountains of salvation, so that he who thirsts may be satisfied with the oracles contained in them: in these alone the school of piety preaches the Gospel: let no man add to or take from them' (*Fest. Ep.* 39). Against this we are asked to set the fact that some of the Scripture proofs which he himself offers are not what to our minds would be conclusive; and thence to infer that when he undertakes to give Scripture proof, he only means something which, in his own mind, might pass for proof, but be quite incapable of standing logical examination. In what a light is this to represent the venerable Father! When Abraham refused to accept land from the Hittite chieftain as a gift, but insisted on paying its value, we are told that he weighed the price in silver current money with the merchant; but if Abraham had given bad weight in money that would not pass, Ephron would feel that he had been much worse dealt with than if his

* See also Newman, *On the Development of Christian Doctrine*, chap. vi. sec. 1.

† *Cont. Gentes*, i. 1. In this place Athanasius teaches the doctrine we have laid down, both as to the sufficiency of Scripture and as to the advantage of human instruction in it.

land had been taken without payment. And so it would be much more straightforward dealing for a Church to ask that we should take her word without any proof, than to offer to give us proof, and then let us find out that we had got to take her word what was proof, and what was not. You may be sure that Athanasius did not offer any Scripture proofs that, according to his own principles of interpretation, he did not believe to be good. We are offered every day by Protestants Scripture proofs, which in our judgments are not good proofs; but that gives us no right to suppose that it is only in some non-natural sense they hold the sufficiency of Scripture. Nay, rather it is the firmness with which they hold that principle which urges them, in their deep conviction of the necessity of offering Scripture proofs for their doctrines, sometimes to press into their service texts which to a sober judgment do not seem conclusive.

Is tradition, then, of no use in the interpretation of Scripture? I believe it has its uses, and important uses, both positive and negative, though its range is more limited than its advocates would have us believe. To speak first of its negative use, we must grant that a new-fangled interpretation of Scripture has to encounter a great presumption against it, arising from the probability that if this were the true interpretation it would not be left for this generation to discover it. I don't say that it is more than a presumption, or that previous students have so sounded all the depths of Scripture as to make it impossible for a late commentator to discover anything which his predecessors have overlooked; but still it *is* a presumption, and one which, in some cases, may rise to something like certainty. Take the text, 'Thou art Peter, and on this rock I will build My Church.' According to modern Romanists this is the charter text of the whole constitution of the Church. By it Peter and his successors were made the governors of the Church, to whom it was to resort for the decision of every dispute, and the solution of every problem. Well, if that had been the true meaning of the text, the other Apostles would have so understood it, at least after their minds had been enlightened by the Holy

Spirit on the day of Pentecost; and they would have taught its meaning to the Churches which they founded. The whole Church would have acted on this rule from the first, and the true meaning of the text on which the rule was founded could never have been forgotten. When we find then, on the contrary, that this is a text on which the greatest diversity of interpretation prevailed among the early Fathers, that a great majority of them do not find in the text a bestowal of personal prerogatives even on Peter, and that none of them find the Bishop of Rome there, then we can confidently say that historical tradition excludes the modern Roman interpretation, because it is absolutely incredible that, if this had been the right one, it should be entirely lost and forgotten, and not recovered for four or five centuries.

Then, again, I believe that, in matters of ritual or other positive institution, tradition can do more useful service than in matter of abstract doctrine. An illustration or two will make my meaning plainer. One example is often brought forward by Roman Catholic writers. When our Lord washed His disciples' feet He said to them, 'If I, then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye ought also to wash one another's feet; for I have given you an example that ye should do as I have done unto you.' We interpret this precept in the spirit, not in the letter. We hold that our Lord, by performing a menial office for His disciples, designed to impress on them more forcibly by a visible sign the precept by which He had before rebuked their ambitious conflicts, 'The princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them, but it shall not be so among you, but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant, even as the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many.' But we are asked, how do we know that we are not to interpret this precept literally. May it not be the case that, in omitting actually to wash one another's feet, we are neglecting a Sacramental rite instituted by our Lord Himself? I think we

must here concede to the Roman Catholic that the usage of the Church is not without weight in settling this question, and that we are all affected by it in our judgment on this matter, even if we are not aware of it. For suppose that the usage had been different—suppose that from time immemorial it had been the practice at Christian meetings for worship that this precept of our Lord's had been read out, and that then some proceeded to wash the feet of others—I do not think that we should then hesitate to give a literal meaning to the words recorded by St. John, and that we should have scrupled to think it sufficient, as we do now, to comply with the spirit of the command.

Something of the same kind may be said with reference to the Sacraments. If we are asked why we think that sprinkling is sufficient compliance with our Lord's command to baptize, it seems to me that it is practically a good answer to say that the Church has always so understood it, for the question cannot be determined either way without an appeal to tradition in some form or another. For, after all, lexicons are only an embodiment of tradition, and it is an appeal to tradition which must settle what is the meaning of the Greek word βαπτίζω. One example more. The Council of Trent, as I already told you, informs us that the Church has learned by tradition, that in the words of St. James are taught the matter, the form, the proper minister, and the effect of the Sacrament of Extreme Unction. Well, if in place of taking the word of the Council of Trent, we examine into the tradition for ourselves, we find the facts quite the opposite to the assertion of the Council. We find that the anointing of the sick, whose recovery was not aimed at or expected, was a comparatively modern practice, arising not out of a traditional, but quite a private, interpretation of the well-known words of St. James, and that those who first introduced the practice were quite at sea as to the proper way of carrying it out, with regard to points on which they would have needed no instruction if this had been a Sacrament of Apostolic institution. I will freely own that my judgment on this so-called Sacrament would be quite different

from what it is now if there had been historic evidence of the descent of the practice from the Apostolic age. Other instances of the same kind might be given, but I have said enough to show that, in rejecting tradition, it is not our wish arbitrarily to cut ourselves off from using any source of information that may be accessible to us. We are willing to give its due weight to anything that can be established on sufficient evidence, but we will not set aside the obvious meaning of Scripture, on the mere presumption that the currency of doctrines opposed to Scripture must have originated in tradition.

It remains for me to speak of the province of hermeneutical tradition on points, not of ritual, but of abstract doctrine. And here a very obvious remark may be made—that the use of a text at any time, to prove a doctrine, if it does not prove that use of the text to be the right one, at least shows that those who so employed it believed the doctrine which they alleged that text to prove. Thus, in modern Roman Catholic books of devotion, you may find a text from Canticles cited in the form, 'Thou art all fair, my love, and there is no spot of original sin in thee,' and used to prove the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mary. We are not bound to believe that to be the true meaning of the text; but we cannot deny that its being now so used would prove at any future time that the Church of Rome in the nineteenth century believed in the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception. It gains little for a doctrine to prove that the Church of the nineteenth century believed it, but it is of great importance to know how the Church of the first century believed, for it is reasonable to think that any doctrines in which the Churches that were taught by the Apostles agreed were part of the Apostles' teaching. And so at any time the current interpretations of Scripture are an excellent index to the doctrine of the Church at the time; and the nearer the age is to the Apostles, the more valuable is the knowledge what the doctrine was. I make this remark with reference to a class of interpretations which, no doubt, Newman had in his mind when he spoke of some of the interpretations of Athanasius as not being logically defensible.

There is a class of interpretations with such antiquity to recommend them, that if any interpretations can make a claim to have been imposed by tradition, these can. The doctrine of them is in perfect agreement with our own, and yet there are many of them to which we should not now like to pledge ourselves—at least we should not like to use them in controversy against opponents, as some of the ancient Fathers did not scruple to do. To the early Fathers all the Old Testament spoke of Christ. They found Him in a number of places where, without their help, we should not discover Him. We have every reason to think that the Book of Psalms furnished a large part of the Christian service from the very earliest times. There is no part of the Old Testament which the early Fathers seem to have so completely at their fingers' ends, or quote so accurately and so frequently. And here in particular they recognize our Lord as the subject of every Psalm. Now, though we may be willing to admit some of their Messianic interpretations of the Old Testament as certain, others as probable, it is impossible for a modern mind to accept them all. Take, for example, this one, which by reason of its venerable antiquity has as good a right to be accepted as an interpretation imposed by tradition as any that can be named. I refer to a discovery made in the Epistle of Barnabas, which many learned men have accepted as by the Apostle of that name; and though I do not myself agree with their opinion, the work is certainly one of the earliest of uninspired Christian writings. Finding in his Greek Bible the number of servants with whom Abraham pursued the kings to be three hundred and eighteen, or in Greek numeral letters τιή, Barnabas in the last two letters, ι, η, at once discovers Jesus. But what, then, is Tau? Tau is the cross, which in shape it resembled. Barnabas declares this to be one of the most valuable pieces of instruction he had ever communicated, but says that those whom he addressed were worthy of it. And, accordingly, several who came after him thought it worth stealing from him. But I need not say that modern critics are not able to believe in a Messianic prophecy committed to the Old Testament, but intended to remain an

impenetrable secret until its Hebrew came to be translated into Greek.

There are other Patristical Messianic interpretations, the case for rejecting which is not quite so clear as this one, yet clear enough to make us absolutely refuse to allow early tradition to impose on us interpretations of Scripture. In fact, if a man gives a far-fetched interpretation of Scripture we are not bound to receive it, because it is a long time ago since he did it, and because a great many people have repeated it after him. I am quite satisfied to take as illustrating my principles the texts which Cardinal Newman (*Development*, p. 324) instances as brought forward by Nicene and ante-Nicene writers as palmary proofs of our Lord's Divinity. The first is the beginning of the 45th Psalm, of which the Septuagint translation is Ἐξηρεύξατο ἡ καρδία μου λόγον ἀγαθόν. If hermeneutic tradition is entitled to impose an interpretation on us, we are certainly bound to understand this passage as referring to the Eternal Generation of the Divine Logos. But I observe that the late revisers of the Old Testament have not materially altered the old rendering, 'My heart is inditing a good matter'; and certainly I should feel much embarrassed in controversially maintaining the views I hold concerning our Lord's Divinity if I were compelled to find them in this passage. Newman's second example is the passage (Prov. viii. 22) κύριος ἔκτισέ με ἀρχὴν ὁδῶν αὐτοῦ. Orthodox and Arian interpreters agreed that these words related to our Blessed Lord, their only point of difference being how the word rendered ἔκτισε was to be understood. But looking on hermeneutic tradition as a guide, but not as an infallible guide, I feel myself free to decline to accept some Messianic interpretations which are supported by a very strong consensus of early opinion.

If, however, without insisting on details, we look to the general spirit of the early Patristical interpretation of the Old Testament, we find what I think may be granted to be an Apostolic tradition; I mean the principle that the Old Testament is not contrary to the New—the principle that it was Jesus of whom Moses in the law and the prophets did

write—He whom in a thousand types the Mosaic institutions, nay, the Old Testament history, was in God's providence ordained to foreshadow. Here it is quite possible for a Christian reader to recognize types that he could not urge in controversy against a Jew or a Socinian. In the investigations of last Term I found, in many cases, that there were verbal coincidences between the language of very early writers and that of our Gospels, which left no doubt on my own mind that these writers had used the Gospels; and yet, it was not possible to demonstrate that anyone was wrong who might choose to say that the coincidence was only accidental. There is nothing illogical in this method of proceeding. If we have independent evidence that a book was in circulation, or that a doctrine was current, at the time when a particular author wrote, then a very slight casual allusion might suffice to convince us that he had read the book, or that he held the doctrine, though, without independent confirmation, the evidence might not be at all conclusive. So, if we have independent evidence that our Lord was such as no other man was, and that He came to do a work such as no other man did or could have done, then it becomes more probable than not that He did not burst on the world without having His coming prepared for; and if we believe in the Divine inspiration of the Old Testament Prophets, we are at once ready to believe that they were commissioned to speak of Him. That this was the attitude of mind in which the Apostles had trained the Churches which they founded is, I think, demonstrated by the general tone of the Old Testament interpretation of the early Church: and in establishing this point hermeneutic tradition does us valuable service. And if we are compelled to acknowledge that the disciples often outran their masters, and pushed their principles to indefensible extremes, we are not obliged to follow to those extremes guides whom we do not consider infallible; yet the evidence remains unshaken of the Apostolic character of that tradition of the dignity of Christ's person and work which lies at the foundation of these interpretations.

We might, indeed, use the early hermeneutical tradition

to draw a doctrinal conclusion of a negative character. As the early Church saw Christ everywhere in the Bible, so the modern Church of Rome sees the Virgin Mary everywhere. One example I mentioned incidentally just now. Well, I think it is a very significant fact that early Patristical interpretation is altogether blind to indications of the dignity of the Blessed Virgin. In the book of Revelation, the woman clothed with the sun, and with the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars, who brought forth the man child, and then was made to flee into the wilderness (chap. xii.), in which description modern Romanists find a prediction of the glory of the Virgin, is by the ancient commentators, with absolute unanimity, understood of the Church.* You know what meaning the phrase 'the Virgin Mother' would bear in a modern book: in an ancient writer it would as certainly mean the Church,† and he would not seem to dream that any other meaning could be put on his words. We cannot help inferring that the Virgin Mary did not fill the place in the thoughts of men of those days that she has come to fill in recent times. The examples I have given will show that, while we hold ourselves perfectly free to criticize very ancient interpretations of Scripture, and so hold what is called hermeneutic tradition to be as far as possible from being an infallible guide, yet the study of these interpretations may throw most important light on the doctrinal principles of the ancient Church.

I must not pass from this subject of Patristical interpretation without adding a little to a few words I said last Term about the two great schools of interpretation, the Alexandrian and the Syrian. Alexandria was the home of the allegorical method. It had flourished there from pre-Christian times. Homer was the Bible of the Greeks; yet, as culture advanced, the stories told of the gods, both by the great poet and by other authorities who had gained popular belief, were felt to be such as could not be reconciled with the honour of the divinities. Then apologists invoked the

* See, for example, Hippolytus, *On Christ and Antichrist*, § 61.

† See the letter of the Churches of Vienne and Lyons (Euseb. *H. E.* v. 1.).

aid of allegory: Jupiter only meant the upper air, Poseidon was the sea, Apollo the sun. We were not to suppose that Apollo descended in person to shoot his arrows for seven days; what was intended was that the sun beat with his rays on the damp ground, and so caused a pestilence which was destructive to the Grecian host; and in like manner other myths apparently degrading to the character of the gods were explained away, as mere modes of expressing certain physical facts. Thus the Jewish apologists found the method of allegory ready to their hands when cavils were made by the heathen philosophers of Alexandria against statements in the Jewish sacred books. The great Alexandrian Jew, Philo, whose works largely remain, freely had recourse to allegorical explanations when objections were made to the morality of parts of the Mosaic narrative—so freely, that the historic character of the narrative was in danger of disappearing. In this school were brought up some of the greatest ornaments of the Alexandrian school of Christian philosophy. Clement was a careful student and a warm admirer of Philo. Clement's successor, Origen, carried to still greater lengths the allegorical method. The spiritual meaning was the soul; the literal, only the body; and in his hands the literal meaning often ran the risk of being quite evaporated away. If ever the literal sense presented a difficulty, or what looked like a contradiction, allegory afforded an immediate solution of it. If hermeneutic tradition had a right to force interpretations on our acceptance, it would be in the case of some of those allegorical interpretations of the Alexandrian school; so early was their origin, so wide was the acceptance they gained, so generally were their principles adopted.

I look upon St. Ambrose as one of the chief agents in naturalizing many of these expositions in the West. From being a heathen magistrate he was made a bishop; but he was an able man and a good Greek scholar, and he speedily laid some of the most celebrated Greek theologians under contribution for his sermons and treatises. From Origen he drew much, both directly and indirectly; and what he drew he passed on to his pupil St. Augustine, and through him to the

Western Church generally. St. Augustine constantly adopts the principle that an apparent contradiction between two texts of Scripture is to be regarded as an index pointing out that allegorical interpretation must be resorted to. If I were to think of giving you examples of interpretations of this school, in which all regard to the context or to the circumstances of the sacred writer is lost sight of, specimens are so abundant, that there is great difficulty in selection. Here is an explanation from St. Jerome of a difficult passage in Ecclesiastes (xi. 2) of which we should certainly be glad to welcome a good explanation. The text is: 'Give a portion to seven, and also to eight; for thou knowest not what evil shall be upon the earth.' St. Jerome's explanation is: 'The number seven denotes the Old Testament, because of the Sabbath therein enjoined to be celebrated on the seventh day; the number eight denotes the New Testament, because the Saviour rose on the eighth day. The text, then, directs us not to restrict our faith, as the Jews do, to the Old Testament; nor, as do the Marcionites, Manichees, and other heretics, to the New. We must believe both Testaments, for "we know not what evil shall be upon the earth"; that is to say, we cannot comprehend now the merited tortures and punishments reserved for those who are upon earth, namely, for the Jews and heretics who deny either Testament.' This book of Ecclesiastes does not strike us as the most Messianic of Old Testament books; but Ambrose, Augustine, and Jerome find Christ and the Gospel in every line. Thus, 'There is one alone, and there is not a second; yea, he hath neither child nor brother: yet is there no end of all his labour; neither is his eye satisfied with riches; neither saith he, For whom do I labour, and bereave my soul of good? This also is vanity' (Eccles. iv. 8). Here is the commentary: 'This is Christ; for He is one, and there is not a second, for He came to save the world without any companion. He has not a brother; for, though many sons of God are by adoption brethren of Christ, none could be joined with Him in the work of Redemption. Of His labour and suffering for our sins there is no end; man cannot comprehend the greatness

thereof.' "The eye is not satisfied" &c., means that Christ is never weary in seeking our salvation. The text goes on, "Two are better than one"; that is to say, it is better to have Christ with us than to be alone, open to the snares of the enemy. "If two lie together, they shall have heat; but how can one be warm alone?" that is, if any should lie in the grave, yet, if he have Christ with him, he shall be warmed, and, being quickened, shall live again. Other passages, directing to eat bread with a merry heart, &c., plainly refer to the use of the Sacraments.

I take a few other examples from a collection of answers to heathen objections made by a Greek disciple and admirer of Origen, from whom these answers were derived.* The objection is: 'No Christian now has faith, even as much as a grain of mustard seed; for not one is able to say to a mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea.' Answer.—'Mountain here does not mean a literal mountain, but a devil, as in Jer. li. 25: "Behold, I am against thee, O destroying mountain, which destroyest all the earth." He does not say, if thou shalt say to *a* mountain, but unto *this* mountain, namely, the devil, which had been just cast out.' This was one of the Eastern comments imported by Ambrose (in Ps. xxxvi. 35). So, again, the heathen objects to the credibility of Paul's statement that we shall be caught up in the clouds. The apologist explains that 'clouds' does not mean literal clouds, but angels, as in the texts, 'I will charge the clouds that they rain no rain upon it,' or 'Clouds and darkness are round about Him.' Once more, the heathen objects that the agony in the garden shows our Lord to have been weaker in courage than many men have proved themselves in like circumstances. The apologist answers, that our Lord's display of weakness was made only to lure the devil on to the last assault, in which his power would be broken for ever. The devil had been holding back, suspecting our Lord's divinity. Our Lord, therefore, not really wishing that His cup might pass, but that He might

* Macarius Magnes, *Apocritica*.

drink it as soon as possible, enticed the devil on, and caught him by baiting the hook of His divinity with the worm of His humanity; and this is the meaning of the verse, Psalm xxii. 6, 'I am a worm, and no man.' This interpretation is certainly Origen's; and I need not give other examples to show why, with every admiration for the ability and ingenuity of Fathers of this school, we think it better to do without their help in the interpretation of Scripture, believing that, as Lord Bacon says, 'a lame man on the right road will come to his journey's end sooner than the fleetest runner on a wrong one.' Thus, there are thirty-five books of Gregory the Great's Commentary on Job. They may be very valuable to anyone who cares to know what were the opinions of Gregory upon various subjects, but to a person anxious to know the meaning of the Book of Job they are absolutely worthless. I own, however, I look with some envy on those who can adopt these principles of interpretation; for it is immensely more easy for an ingenious man to write sermons if he uses a principle of interpretation which will enable a preacher to get any doctrine out of any text.

The founder of a healthier system of interpretation is said to have been Diodorus of Tarsus; but scarcely anything of his remains; and it is Theodore of Mopsuestia whom we have the means of knowing as the initiator of the literal school of interpretation. I do not say he had not predecessors. Besides his master Diodorus, Lucian the Martyr is said to have been one. But Theodore wrote a special treatise against Origen and the Allegorists, and founded a school of interpretation, to which belonged some of the greatest ornaments of the Syrian Church. His principle was to look carefully to the context, and to the circumstances of the sacred writer; consequently he interprets passages of David, or Solomon, or Hezekiah, which his predecessors had understood of Christ. You may imagine, therefore, that his system had much violent opposition to encounter; and it may very possibly be true that Theodore, in his reaction against the allegorizers, went into the other extreme, and insisted too

mechanically on his rule that, if one part of a passage related to a contemporary person, a spiritual explanation must not be given to any other part; or that, if there was any one verse in a Psalm which was not applicable to Christ, none of it could be so. However this may be, it is the commentators of this school who have produced the only exegetical works which a modern student can read continuously with pleasure and profit. Great part, for instance, of Chrysostom's Homilies have not been superseded as intelligent and successful attempts to bring out the true meaning of the author on whom he comments. This is far indeed from being Cardinal Newman's opinion, and the language in which he expresses his aversion to the Syrian school of exegesis is strong enough to meet the demerits of any heresy.* He traces Arianism to the influence of the methods of Lucian, already mentioned, though it is certain that Diodorus was free from any Arian taint. But it cannot be denied that the leading Nestorians were disciples of Theodore. It will be useful for you to bear in memory that Nestorianism is a Syrian, as Eutychianism is an Alexandrian heresy. The rationalizing tendencies of the Syrian school harmonize with the Nestorian accentuation of the human nature of our Lord. Independently of this, from the nature of the case, the Syrian interpreters, being obliged to reject a multitude of explanations that had been long current and had the support of venerable names, were on the side of human reason against traditional authority; and so we can understand Newman's antipathy to those who were the Protestants of their day.

It is not my purpose to trace at length the history of mediæval interpretation. Origen had counted three senses of Scripture—the literal, the moral, and the mystical—which he compared to the trichotomy of body, soul, and spirit in the nature of man. In the middle ages these three had increased to four—the literal, the moral, the allegorical, and the anagogical—this last being appropriated to those allegorical

* See the passage in the essay *On Development*, already referred to; and *Arians of the Fourth Century*, chap. i., and Appendix.

explanations which relate to the future state. Thus, according to an example commonly given, the Sabbath, according to the moral sense, would mean a resting from sin; according to the allegorical, the rest of our Lord in the grave; and, according to the anagogical, the future rest in the kingdom of God. These were summed up in the memorial lines—

> 'Littera gesta docet; quid credas allegoria;
> Moralis quid agas; quo tendis anagogia.'

In truth, the latter three senses are but subdivisions of what we should simply describe as allegorical, without feeling any need of subdivision.

But my main object now is to point out the necessity of extreme caution in the use of the allegorical method. If this be relied on as singly sufficient to prove a doctrine of which no other valid proof can be found, then tradition really becomes the mistress of Scripture; for then, though we profess to deduce our doctrine from Scripture, we really bring it into it first, according to the lines—

> 'Hic liber est in quo quærit sua dogmata quisque,
> Invenit et pariter dogmata quisque sua.'

Roman Catholic controversialists have called the Bible a nose of wax, which any man can twist as he pleases. This is true if you adopt the allegorical method of interpretation; or rather then, if it had been a nose of iron, it would make no difference, so powerful is the wrenching instrument employed. Origen's Commentary on St. John contains copious extracts from the previous commentary by the Valentinian Heracleon; for it is curious that the earliest known continuous commentary on a New Testament book is by this heretic. And Heracleon, who was evidently a disciple of the same school of allegorical interpretation, has no difficulty in finding Valentinianism in St. John's Gospel, by interpretations which seem to me not a whit more forced or unnatural than many which are used by Origen himself to deduce orthodox doctrine.

I am not now lecturing on the interpretation of Scripture, and therefore cannot enter into some discussions which would

properly come before us if this were my main subject. But I have thought it necessary to say something about different schools of interpretation, because the question we have been discussing between Scripture and tradition becomes practically unimportant if allegorical interpretation be freely employed. When this method is used, a proof may pretend to be derived from Scripture alone; but, in real truth, tradition is the foundation of the fabric.

XI.

DOES THE CHURCH OF ROME BELIEVE IN HER OWN INFALLIBILITY?

I HAVE, in previous Lectures, sufficiently discussed the abstract question, whether God has provided for us any infallible guidance; and I consider that I have shown that there is not the least reason to think that with respect to religious truth God has dealt with us in a manner contrary to all His other dealings with us, by giving us such secure, never-failing means of arriving at knowledge as shall relieve us from the trouble of search and inquiry, and shall make error impossible. I propose now to lay before you such evidence as will show that, whether there be anywhere an infallible Church or not, the Church of Rome certainly is not.

You may, perhaps, think that this is a little waste of time; for, if no Church be infallible, it follows at once that the Church of Rome is not. It is true that, in the present controversy, I constantly feel tempted to give points to our opponents. In the attempt to establish their case, they make so many false assumptions, that, if we make them a present of one, they are under no less difficulty when they come to the next step in the argument. But it is not as a mere matter of generosity that I refrain from pressing to the utmost the victory we have gained on the abstract question. Men are not influenced by mere logic: they will easily believe what they wish to believe, whether there be logical proof of it or not.

Accordingly, you will seldom find in Romish books of controversy any of that discussion which has occupied us so long, and which really concerns the fundamental point in the

controversy. It would be so very pleasant to have a guide able to save us all trouble and risk, and to whom we might implicitly commit ourselves, that Romish advocates generally spare themselves the pains of proving that such a guide exists, and prefer to take that for granted as a thing self-evident. The older books on controversy, assuming that there was somewhere an infallible Church, and that the only question was where she was to be found, occupied much space in telling of marks or *notes* by which the true Church could be distinguished from false pretenders. On this much discussion on the 'notes of the Church' ensued, it being easy to show that several of the notes enumerated by Bellarmine are possessed by bodies which no one can imagine to be the true Church, while it is extremely disputable whether the Church of Rome possesses those notes to which we should be willing to attribute most value. But in the actual history of perversions to Romanism this part of the discussion has usually been skipped; and thus the proof has been simplified into: 'There is an infallible Church somewhere, and no Church but that of Rome can claim the attribute.'

Now, although of the two propositions—'The Church of Rome is infallible'; 'Other Churches are not'—the former is the one we deny, while we admit the latter—Romish advocates seldom offer any proof of the former, and spend all their declamation on the latter. They tell of errors committed by other communions, of theological problems wrongly solved, or of which no certain solution can be given, in the hope that the hearer, perplexed by so much uncertainty, may gladly accept offered guidance without scrutinizing its claims too minutely. It is so natural to wish to have an infallible guide, that men are found well disposed to give credence to the agreeable intelligence that such a guide exists.

Now, to persons in this frame of mind it is not enough to show that there is no reason to think that God has provided such a guide. The possibility still remains that He *may* have done so. We all believe in a miraculous revelation, through which God has done something for His creatures over and above His ordinary course of dealing with them.

Shall we put limits on His bounty, or deny the possibility that He may have made the way to religious truth as secure as the most exacting can demand?

It is necessary, therefore, to quit the region of abstract discussion. But it is always unsafe to neglect to compare a theory with facts. When we attempt to decide on God's dealings by our own notions of the fitness of things, and venture to pronounce beforehand what sort of supernatural guidance He would provide for us, the most sanguine theorist has no right to imagine that he can get beyond a probable conclusion; and he is bound to examine whether, in point of fact, God *has* provided such guidance. The line taken by Romish advocates reminds me of what Cervantes tells of the course taken by Don Quixote in the manufacture of his helmet. The good knight, having constructed one which he thought admirable, proceeded to test its strength; and in a moment, by one stroke of his sword, demolished the labour of a week. So he made a new one; but as it would be very unpleasant to have one of not sufficient strength, he this time satisfied himself by pronouncing his workmanship to be strong enough, without trying any imprudent experiments with his sword. I feel it, therefore, to be not enough that Romish advocates should tell us of the failures of others, if they do not submit to some examination what they offer as superior; and I am persuaded, as I have said, that the true result of such an examination is that, whether or not there be anywhere an infallible Church, the Church of Rome certainly is not.

But it may be asked, How is it possible to give proof that the Church of Rome has erred, as long as the question of her possible infallibility is left open? If we pronounce any decision of hers to be erroneous, we may be told that it is she who is in the right, and that we are wrong. To recur to an illustration which I formerly employed: we engage a professional guide to conduct us over a pass we have never crossed before, and how can we be able before the journey is ended to convict him of leading us wrong? The path he takes may, to our eyes, be unpromising and quite unlike what we should

ourselves have chosen; but if we hesitate, he can smile at our opposing our ignorance to his superior knowledge, and can assure us that at our journey's end we shall find him to have been in the right. Yet it might happen in such a case that even before the journey was over we should have good reason to conclude that our guide did not understand his business. Suppose that whenever we came to a place where two paths diverged, the guide hung back, and, as long as we were hesitating, carefully abstained from giving any hint of his opinion as to which was the right one; but when we had made our choice, and had struck into one of the paths, then overtook us, and assured us we were all right, should we not have a right to suspect him of ignorance of his business, and think that but for the honour and glory of the thing we might as well have had no guide at all? Suppose, too, that after we had taken a path under the encouragement and, as we believed, with the full approbation of our guide, we found ourselves stopped by an impassable morass, should we think it a satisfactory explanation to be told by our guide, as we were retracing our steps, that his approbation of this unlucky path had been expressed by him merely conversationally, in his private, not his professional, capacity?

I think it admits of historical proof that the Church of Rome has shrunk with the greatest timidity from exercising this gift of infallibility on any question which had not already settled itself without her help, and that on several occasions, where the Pope has ventured to make decisions, these decisions are now known to have been wrong, and the case has to be met by pitiable evasions. The Pope was not speaking *ex cathedra;* that is to say, he had guided the Church wrong only in his private, not his professional, capacity.

Let us examine, then, by the evidence of facts, whether the Church of Rome believes her own claim to infallibility. Acting is the test of belief. If a quack claimed to have a universal medicine, warranted to cure all diseases, we should not need to inquire into the proofs of its virtues if we saw his own children languishing in sickness, and found that he

never tried his medicine on them. If an alchemist asserted that he possessed the philosopher's stone, and could turn the baser metals into gold, his pretensions would be disposed of if we saw his own family starving, and that he made no attempt to make any gold to relieve them. So when we find in the bosom of the Church of Rome disputes and perplexities, as in other Churches; that the infallible authority is not invoked to solve them; that its interference is late and vacillating, and sometimes erroneous, have we not a right to conclude that the Church of Rome herself does not believe in the infallibility which she claims?*

But, really, I must first say a few words on the question, Does she claim it? Some of you may chance to have met a book by a Mr. Seymour, called *Mornings with the Jesuits*, in which the author gives his own report of conferences which he held with the Jesuit Fathers at Rome, who unsuccessfully attempted his conversion. On one occasion they used the syllogism, A Church which does not claim infallibility cannot be a true Church: the Church of England does not claim infallibility, therefore cannot be a true Church. They expected him, of course, to deny the major, and were prepared to carry on the controversy accordingly; but Mr. Seymour handed them back their syllogism with the word 'England' erased, and 'Rome' substituted. He asked them for proof that the Church of Rome ever claimed infallibility. 'Of course I allow,' he said, 'that individual theologians ascribe to her this attribute, but prove to me that she has ever ascribed it to herself in any authoritative document.'† I own I was not without suspicion that Mr. Seymour had dressed up his tale a little when he described the consternation and perplexity into which the Jesuits were thrown by his assertion that the Trent decrees contained no claim to

* In this and in the following Lecture I have made considerable use of a tract by Dr. Maurice, reprinted in 'Gibson's Preservative': *Doubts concerning Roman Infallibility;* (1) *whether the Church of Rome believe it.* In writing the Lecture I used Dr. Maurice's tract in the form in which it was modernized by the late Dr. Todd. (*Irish Ecclesiastical Journal*, December, 1851.)

† The absence of the claim from the creed of Pope Pius IV. was noticed also by Dr. Newman. (*Prophetical Office of the Church*, p. 61.)

infallibility. But it so happened that in the course of events the Jesuits were expelled from Rome, and one of Mr. Seymour's two antagonists came to England, where Mr. Capes made his acquaintance. He describes him as a most fair-minded and honest man, and an excellent specimen of a well-instructed Jesuit, as might have been expected from his having been chosen to argue with a controversial English clergyman on a visit to Rome. And he told Mr. Capes that it was quite true that he had never taken notice of the absence of the claim from the Trent decrees until it was pointed out to him in this discussion. Mr. Ffoulkes also, another who, like Mr. Capes, made the journey to Rome and back, states that he was never asked to accept this doctrine when he joined the Church of Rome, and that if he had been asked he would perhaps not have joined her. All he was required to admit was the supremacy of the Roman See, 'Sanctam Catholicam et Apostolicam Romanam ecclesiam omnium ecclesiarum matrem et magistram agnosco.' I will not anticipate discussions that may hereafter come before us, by examining what exactly these words mean, or whether anything else in a formal document of the Roman Church amounts to a claim of infallibility. For practically the Church of Rome at the present day certainly does claim infallibility. The arrogance of her language admits of no other interpretation. And therefore I do not class this question with the others I am about to bring under your notice, in which the Roman trumpet gives an uncertain sound. If the doctrine of Infallibility were much insisted on in sermons by Roman Catholic preachers, but if their controversialists shrank from defending it against Protestants; if they treated it as one of those things not *de fide*, which were asserted by vehement and hot-headed theologians, but which the calm voice of the Church had abstained from pronouncing on, *then* we might taunt the professed guide with being unable to tell us the extent of his powers; but at present it is quite unjust to accuse him of any modest reticence as to the extent of his prerogatives. We must rather make a different use of the absence of any definition of this cardinal doctrine. It shows

that the practice came first, the theory came afterwards—if indeed it can even yet be said to be quite come. Arrogant Pontiffs presumed to act as if they were infallible, and the necessity of justifying their conduct demands a theory that they really are so; but the lateness of the theory, which even yet is not included in the formula that converts must subscribe, is proof enough that from the beginning it was not so.

I may, however, say a few words now, though I shall have to speak more fully on the subject by-and-by, about the disputes which have raged within the Roman communion for centuries, and which were only in our own time cleared up, and then only partially, as to the organ of the Church's infallibility. Does the gift reside in the Church diffusive, or only in its head, or in a general council, or in Pope and council together? The existence of controversy on such a subject is in itself demonstration of the unreality of the gift. If Christ had appointed an infallible tribunal, His Church would have resorted to it from the first; the tradition where it was to be found could never have been lost, nor could this have given rise to one of the most angry controversies in the Church. To recur to our old illustration: suppose we boasted that Dublin was not as other cities, where the cure of diseases was precarious; that *we* had an infallible authority, whence we could learn, without risk of error, the certain cure of every disease. Suppose that an invalid stranger, attracted to our city by our vaunts, inquired on his arrival whom he was to consult? 'The President of the College of Physicians,' says one; 'it is he who possesses the wonderful gift.' 'Nay,' says a second; 'he may make mistakes; it is in the council of the College that the gift resides.' 'Not so,' says a third; 'either, separately, may go wrong; but if you can get both to agree, you are sure of being rightly advised.' 'No,' cries a fourth; president or council may blunder separately or together; the gift belongs to the whole medical profession of Dublin: it is true, they wrangle at times among themselves, but they always manage to settle their disputes at last, and whatever remedies they unanimously adopt in the end are certain to be effectual.' Surely, when the stranger heard this disagreement, he would

conclude without further inquiry, that he had been taken in by lying tales; that we were, in truth, no better off in respect of medical science than other cities, and that he might just as well travel back to his own physicians.

Accordingly, it was this disagreement as to the organ of infallibility which was the last stumbling-block to Dr. Newman on his journey to Rome. In the last book of his Anglican days, published not so very long before his formal surrender, in language which, in spite of its show of hostility, plainly betrays the attraction that Rome was exercising over him, he says: 'This inconsistency in the Romish system one might almost call providential. Nothing could be better adapted than it is to defeat the devices of human wisdom, and to show to thoughtful inquirers the hollowness of even the most specious counterfeit of Divine truth. The theologians of Rome have been able, dexterously to smoothe over a thousand inconsistencies, and to array the heterogeneous precedents of centuries in the semblance of design and harmony. But they cannot complete the system in its most important and essential point. They can determine in theory the nature, degree, extent, and object of the infallibility which they claim, but they cannot agree among themselves where it resides. As in the building of Babel, the Lord has confounded their language, and the structure remains half finished, a monument at once of human daring and its failure.' (*Prophetical Office of the Church*, p. 180.)

But you may ask, Is not the controversy over now? Did not the Pope, at the Vatican Council of 1870, bear witness to himself, and declare that every theory was wrong which made the organ of infallibility other than himself? But what time of day is this to find the answer to a question so fundamental? Can we believe that Christ before He left this earth provided His Church with an infallible guide to truth, and that it took her more than 1800 years before she could find out who that guide was? It seems almost labour wasted to proceed with the proofs I was about to lay before you, of the neglect or inability of the infallible judge of controversies to settle controversies, when it took him so long to settle that

controversy in which his own privileges were so vitally concerned.

Let me trace, however, something of the history of that other dispute which, after it had raged for centuries, Pius IX. undertook to settle: the question about the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mary. In a future Lecture, either this Term or the next, I mean to give you an explanation of this doctrine, which will make you acquainted with some of the most thorny speculations of scholastic theology. What I am at present concerned with is only the history of the doctrine, taken as a specimen history of a dispute within the Church of Rome. The history of a dispute is the best evidence as to what authority for settling disputes the disputants believe in.

When I speak of authority for settling disputes, it is well to remind you of a little ambiguity about this word authority. We might mean the authority of superior knowledge, or merely of official position. Any judge may have authority to decide a question of law, in the sense that his decision will bind the parties, and that they must submit to it; but there are some judges who, on account of their knowledge and ability, rank as legal authorities, and have set precedents from which their successors differ with reluctance; while, in this sense of the word, other judges are of no authority at all. Now everyone will grant to the Pope the authority of official position. He has power to declare the doctrine of his Church, to depose any ecclesiastic who rejects his decision, or even to excommunicate any lay person who opposes himself to it. But we might say as much for the Synod of the Church of Ireland. It, too, can declare the doctrine of that Church, and can make the acceptance of that doctrine a condition of clerical or lay communion. But now there is this difference between these two kinds of authority, that the interference of the authority of confessed superior knowledge is welcomed and willingly submitted to, while it is often just the reverse with the other kind of authority. If two of you were disputing on a subject of which you had little knowledge; suppose, for instance, that you knew nothing of anatomy, and that you had a difference of opinion how many ribs a man has; if a skilled anatomist

were present, you would dispute no longer, but ask him; and then the dispute would be at an end. There has been long and warm controversy as to the authorship of the letters of Junius. Suppose a sealed volume were discovered, to which the author had committed his secret, people would not refuse to break the seal because they had misgivings whether their own theory were the true one. All parties would say, let us know the truth; and when the truth was known the controversy would be at an end.

It is quite the reverse when the interference is on the part of the authority, not of knowledge, but of official position. Then those who are likely to get the worst deprecate interference; they threaten not to submit to the decision, and the fear of such a refusal of submission is apt to inspire great caution in the authority whose interference might be solicited. If it were proposed that the General Synod should make a new decision of doctrine condemning the views now held by some members of the Church, I can tell from experience what would be likely to occur. Those who felt themselves to be in a minority would struggle that the Synod should abstain from making any decision on the question; they would threaten to leave the Church if their views were condemned; and then a number of cautious moderate men, thinking the evils of a schism greater than those of the toleration of opinions from which they themselves dissented, would join the minority in preventing any decision from being pronounced.

Remember this distinction, for it will serve as a test guide in your study of history. If you are fully persuaded that a man on any subject knows a great deal more than yourself, you do not want to stop his mouth. The more he speaks the better you are pleased, and you willingly give up your own previous opinion when he tells you it is wrong. It is quite different when a man who is your superior in authority wants to interfere with your opinions on a subject which you believe he knows no more of than yourself. Then you want him to hold his tongue. If he does speak, you, perhaps, refuse to listen to him, and if he sees that you are likely not to be afraid to make your dissent public, then, if he wants his authority to

be respected, he will probably have the good sense to discover that to hold his tongue is the most discreet course. You may test in this way whether the Church of Rome believes in her own infallibility. Do the members of that Church show that they believe they have got an infallible guide, who on things of faith knows much better than themselves; and do they accordingly, when they have a theological problem, meekly come to him to be told the solution of it, or do they work out the problem for themselves, and merely invoke the higher authority to reduce their opponents to submission? And does the higher authority himself speak with the confidence of superior knowledge, or rather, with the caution of one who knows that his subjects would not believe him if he pronounced their opinions to be wrong, and who must take care not to strain his authority too far, lest he should cause a revolt? Examine the history of any dispute in the Roman communion, and you will find that the heads of the Roman Church act exactly as the leading members of the Synod of the Church of Ireland would act in a like case, neither showing any belief in their own infallibility themselves, nor any expectation that their followers would believe it; proscribing only such opinions as had become offensive to the great majority of their body, but restrained by a wholesome fear of schism from straining their authority too far.

I take, as I have said, the history of the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception as a typical case. From the beginning of the fourteenth century vehement disputes on this subject had been carried on, the leading parts being taken by two powerful Orders; the Dominicans, following their great doctor, Thomas Aquinas, holding that, though cleansed from original sin before her birth, Mary had been conceived in sin like others; the Franciscans, after their great teacher, Scotus, exempting her from the stain by a special act of God's power. The Dominicans went so far as to accuse the assertors of the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception of heresy, and even charged with mortal sin those who attended the Office of the Immaculate Conception, although that Office had been authorized by papal sanction;

and they charged with sin also those who listened to the sermons in which the doctrine was preached. The annual recurrence of the Feast of the Conception was a signal for the renewal of hostilities, and gave birth every year to scenes of the most scandalous kind. All this time private Christians, puzzled by the most opposite statements of learned men on both sides, must have looked eagerly to the infallible guide, in hopes to learn from him the true doctrine which they were to believe. But the judge was silent. He trimmed and wavered between both parties, and sought to make peace between them, without giving a triumph to either. The strongest step was taken by Sixtus IV., who, though himself a Franciscan, did not venture to declare that the doctrine taught by his own school was true; but who, in 1483, published a brief, in which he condemned those who said that it was a heresy, or that it could not be taught without mortal sin. Would the most ignorant layman have acted differently, if he had the misfortune to be governor of a body divided into two powerful parties, and were called on to pronounce a decision between them on a subject he knew nothing about? What better could he do than postpone his decision *sine die*, and meanwhile condemn the extreme of either party if they used insulting language toward the other?

At length came the Council of Trent, in the course of which it became necessary to draw up an Article on original sin. It seemed then hardly possible to evade the question; for either it must be stated generally that all men are subject to this infection, and then the matter would be decided in favour of the Dominicans; or else the desire of the Franciscans should be complied with, that special mention should be made of the Virgin Mary, exempting her from the plague-spot of the human race. On this, naturally, a violent dispute arose. When the dispute was made known at Rome, instead of embracing the opportunity of declaring by infallible authority the true doctrine on this subject, orders were given to the Papal Legates at Trent to reconcile the contending parties as far as possible, without giving a triumph to either.

The directions were, not to meddle with this matter, which might cause a schism among Catholics; to endeavour to maintain peace between the opposing parties, and to seek some means of giving them equal satisfaction; above all, to observe strictly the brief of Pope Sixtus IV., which forbad preachers to charge the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception with heresy. And in accordance with these instructions the decree of the Council was drawn up. The controversy was named; it was declared that the Council left the matter undetermined, and renewed the brief of Sixtus IV.

This course was, no doubt, under the circumstances, eminently wise and prudent; for it had become plain that, whatever else the parties disagreed in, they agreed in this, that each preferred no decision at all rather than a decision adverse to his own views. But is it not most clearly proved that the Pope did not believe in his own pretence to infallibility, else why not take the opportunity of settling, by the joint authority of Pope and Council—an authority which, in theory, all owned to be infallible—a dispute which had so long convulsed the Church? But to meddle in the matter—that is to say, to decide the question one way or other—'might cause a schism among Catholics'; in other words, these 'Catholics,' whatever they might pretend, did not really believe in the infallibility of the Pope and the Council. Nay, I am putting the matter too weakly; for we do not set up our own opinion against that of an expert on any subject, even though we know that he is far from claiming infallibility; but these 'Catholics' must really have thought that Pope and Council knew no better than themselves. Why should there be danger of a schism after the truth had been ascertained by infallible authority? Surely, no person could be mad enough to separate himself from the Church of Christ in consequence of a decision which he believed to be infallibly true, and to have emanated from a divinely-promised and infallible guidance. The only way of accounting for the conduct of the Pope and of the Council on this occasion is, that neither one or other believed in the pretence of infallibility. For, as I said, acting is the test of faith; and here

the Pope acts as any prudent, well-advised sovereign would act under similar circumstances, endeavouring to avoid a decision that must irritate one party or other, and trying to conciliate both as well as he could. Although he speaks loudly and boldly before the world of his infallible authority, and of the great blessing of being in a Church which possesses an infallible tribunal for settling all disputes, yet he acts as one who was fully aware that there was no such tribunal, and as knowing also that his 'Catholics' believed nothing of the sort, and would run into schism rather than submit to the pretended authority of his infallibility, if it happened to run counter to their own private opinions. It is impossible to have clearer proof than this that the Roman communion does not practically believe in its own claim to infallibility. The guide will not venture to strike into one of two doubtful paths until those whom he is conducting have already made their choice, and *that* because he knows that, though professing to believe in his infallible wisdom, they will not follow him if he should happen not to take the path which they prefer.

There remained, however, one way of accounting for the silence of the Pope and the Council which might save their infallibility; namely, that this particular subject was one on which it had pleased God to make no revelation, and therefore that in the judgment of Pope and Council either view might be innocently held. This view was naturally taken by the Roman Catholics of the last generation. Bishop Milner, for instance, says 'the Church does not decide the controversy concerning the Conception of the Blessed Virgin, and several other disputed points, because she sees nothing clear and certain concerning them either in the written or unwritten Word, and therefore leaves her children to form their own opinions concerning them.' But Pius IX. made it impossible any longer to give this explanation of the silence of his predecessors.

In process of time the whole controversy died away. Franciscans and Dominicans ceased to accuse each other of heresy or mortal sin, and so then was the time that the in-

fallible tribunal ventured to speak; and in my own time (8th December, 1854) the Pope proclaimed that the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception was true, and moreover that the Church had always held it. Certainly in this case the Church carried the 'disciplina arcani' to an immoderate extreme, since neither Bellarmine or Milner, or many other Roman Catholic divines whom I could name, were aware that the Church had any tradition on the subject. But if she had, how are we to excuse Pope Sixtus, or the Council of Trent, who, instead of making known the tradition at the time when the knowledge of it would have done good in healing the violent dissensions which raged between members of the Church, kept silence until people had ceased to feel much interest in the controversy?

And even then there were those who said it was too soon for the Pope to speak. The Pope did not make his decree without first taking advice, and you will find in the Library the answers he got from the bishops of Christendom. Among these, both some of the most eminent of the French bishops, and our Irish professors at Maynooth, declared, not by any means their disbelief in the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception, but their opinion of the inexpedience of defining it by authority. As I have already said, when the interference is not that of superior knowledge, but only that of higher authority, cautious men will consider not only the truth of what they are asked to affirm, but also the prudence of enforcing conformity to it; and so at our own Synod many have voted against putting forth as the doctrine of the Church what they themselves believed to be true. In this case, those who pronounced the decision of the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception to be inopportune, did not say in their own names that it was an addition to the ancient faith of the Church; but they said that Anglican divines would be sure to say so, and would accuse the Roman Church of having broken with her ancient rule, and of now teaching something which had not been taught, 'semper, ubique et ab omnibus.' Thus an obstacle would be placed in the way of their conversion, and quite

gratuitously, since there was at the time no controversy on the subject which there was any need of appeasing.

However much we may believe in the sincerity of those who on this occasion declared that they did not deny the truth of the doctrine, but only the opportuneness of declaring it, it is hard to believe equally in the sincerity of those who some years later raised the question of opportuneness, when it was proposed to define the dogma of the Pope's personal infallibility. Actually to deny a doctrine which an influential Pontiff showed it was his most anxious desire to have affirmed would be too invidious, and so the lower ground was taken by a great majority; and they fought a half-hearted battle, disputing not the truth of the doctrine, but only the expedience of declaring it. I must say that, to my mind, all this controversy about opportunism shows distrust in the infallibility of their guide. It is always opportune to learn something you did not know before, if you have got hold of a person competent to inform you. What is inopportune is that a man should propound his views without necessity to an audience disinclined to receive them; and the fact that Pope and Councils very often have found it inopportune to make dogmatic definitions is proof enough how little their own Church believed in their power to do so.

I could give other illustrations in plenty of the wise timidity of the infallible authority in declining to solve disputed questions. For instance, at Trent there was another question left unsettled besides that about the Immaculate Conception. A question arose whether bishops have their jurisdiction directly by Divine right, or whether they only derive it from the Pope; but after hot disputes it was found expedient to drop the controversy. You will find in Burnet's Commentary on the Seventeenth Article a notice of another controversy, in which the Pope, though asked to determine it, neglected to do so. I refer to controversies between the Dominicans and the Jesuits at the very end of the sixteenth century. The matter in dispute belonged to the class of subjects debated between Calvinists and Arminians. The Jesuits, who took what we may call the Arminian side, were accused of Pelagianism by

the Dominicans, who followed the Augustinian teaching of their great doctor, Thomas Aquinas. In 1594 the Pope undertook the decision of the question. Here we have the very case to meet which one might suppose the gift of infallibility had been conferred: hot controversy in the Church terminated by a resort of both parties to the infallible authority for guidance. Of course it was not to be expected that the Pope should determine so great a question hastily. He appointed committees of theologians to examine the arguments on both sides, known as the celebrated congregations *de auxiliis*, the subject of their inquiries being the help of divine grace bestowed by God on man. I will not weary you with the history of the delays of the investigation: suffice it to say, that after going on some twenty years no result was arrived at. And, politically, this was the wisest course. For if a decision were made, it must of necessity give offence to one or other of two powerful parties—supported, the one by the King of Spain, the other by the King of France; and there was quite a possibility that the rejected party might refuse to submit, and even pronounce the Pope himself heretical.* But would there be any such danger if the parties to the dispute believed in the Pope's infallibility,

* It is worth while to add a few words as to the part taken in this controversy by the great Jesuit, Bellarmine. The controversy arose out of the publication by a Jesuit Professor, Molina, of a book which the Dominicans accused of semi-Pelagianism, and the authoritative condemnation of which they were anxious to obtain. Now, though Bellarmine and other leading Jesuits were unwilling to commit themselves to an approval of all Molina's doctrine, they considered that the condemnation of his book would be a great slur on their Order; and though the condemnation appeared more than once to be on the point of issuing, the Jesuits exercised obstruction so vigorously, that their opposition was in the end successful. It is amusing to read in Cardinal Bellarmine's autobiography how he bullied the poor Pope, Clement VIII., whose own opinion was adverse to Molina. 'You are no theologian,' he said, 'and you must not think that by your own study you can come to understand so very obscure a question.' 'I mean to decide the question,' said the Pope. 'Your Holiness will not decide it,' retorted the Cardinal. There is extant a letter, written after the Congregation appointed by the Pope to examine the matter had reported adversely to Molina, and when he was supposed to be about to act on that report, in which Bellarmine urges that the Pope should not act without first calling a council of bishops, or at least summoning learned men from the Universities. If he acted otherwise, though men would be bound to obey his decree, there would be great murmuring and complaints on the part of the Church and the Universities that they

or if he believed in it himself? If Christ Himself appeared upon earth, we should be glad to obtain from Him an authoritative solution of any of our religious controversies, and we should not dream of stopping His mouth lest His decision should be opposed to our prepossessions. So, though these men profess to believe that the Pope, as a guide to truth, fills the place of Christ on earth, their conduct proves that they do not believe what they say. And the Pope's own conduct shows that he felt himself not in the position of a judge authorized to pronounce a decision to which all parties must submit, but only in that of the common friend of two angry disputants, in favour of neither of whom he dare plainly declare himself on pain of losing the friendship of the other.

In other words, every time the Pope has thought of making a dogmatic decision, he has had to make a prudential calculation of the danger of provoking a schism; and on the occasion of his last definition a schism, as you know, was actually made. But fear on his part of secession shows mutual want of faith in Roman pretensions. For who would punish himself by seceding from the only authorized channel of divine communications? Who would refuse to believe anything if it was declared to him by God Himself, or by one who, he

had not been properly consulted. That the Pope should attempt to study the question for himself was a very tedious and unsatisfactory method, and not that which had been followed by his predecessors. Did Leo X. trouble himself with study when he condemned the Lutheran heretics? He just confirmed the conclusions arrived at by the Catholic Universities of Cologne and Louvain. Paul IV., Julius III., Pius IV., were no students; yet, with the help of the Council of Trent, they declared most important truths. See, on the other hand, what scrapes John XXII. got into when he endeavoured to promulgate the views concerning the Beatific Vision, to which his own study had led him. See into what danger Sixtus V. brought himself and the whole Church—one of the greatest dangers the Church was ever in—when he attempted to correct the Bible according to his own knowledge. And the Pope must be careful not to give occasion to anyone to think that he had made up his own mind before the question had been scientifically investigated. Why, he had said things to Bellarmine himself which had made him resolve to withdraw, and treat no more of the question. If such a one as he lost courage, who had been studying these subjects for thirty years, what would others do? (*Selbstbiographie des Cardinals Bellarmin.* Bonn: 1887, p. 260.) There could not be a better illustration how ill the authority of official position fares when it comes into collision with the authority of superior knowledge.

was quite sure, had authority to speak in God's name? Lord Bacon tells a story of a wise old man who got a great reputation for his success in settling disputes. When privately asked by a friend to explain the secret of his success, he told him it was because he made it a rule to himself never to interfere until the parties had completely talked themselves out, and were glad to get peace on any terms. That was just the way in which the Pope settled the controversy about the Immaculate Conception, by carefully holding his tongue until the dispute was practically over.

XII.

THE HESITATIONS OF THE INFALLIBLE GUIDE.

DR. GOLDSMITH tells us that the Vicar of Wakefield's daughters were given by their mother a guinea a-piece, because the honour of the family required that they should always have money in their pocket; but that each was under strict conditions never to change her guinea. The Pope seems to possess the gift of infallibility on the same terms. The 'honour of the family' requires that he should have it, but obvious considerations of prudence constantly deter him from using it. The slowness of the Pope to interfere in controversies within his own communion is part of a system. I could give illustrations in abundance of the nervous fear of the infallible authority to commit itself irrevocably to any opinion, without leaving always an outlet for retreat in case of need; but the copiousness of material makes selection difficult.

Romish teaching has constantly a double face. To those within the communion it is authoritative, positive, stamped with the seal of infallibility, which none may dispute without forfeiting his right to be counted a good Catholic. Consequently, I have heard Roman Catholic laymen express the utmost astonishment at hearing their Church charged with want of positiveness in her utterances, this being, in their opinion, the last fault that can be charged upon her. But this is because they only know how she speaks to those who will not venture to challenge the correctness of her teaching. She speaks differently to those who have courage to impugn it and bring it to a test. Then the statements assailed are said to be but private, unauthorized opinion, to which the Church is not pledged, and which may be proved to be absurd without injuring her reputation.

(1). For example, since we are told that private judgment is insufficient to determine with certainty the meaning of Scripture, it might be expected that the infallible guide would publish an authorized commentary on Scripture, setting forth the interpretation guaranteed by that unanimous consent of the Fathers, according to which the Creed of Pius IV. binds all to interpret. But nothing of the kind has been done. If annotated editions are sometimes issued with the approval of the authorities, the sanction is intended to imply no more than apparent freedom from grave heresy, and the notes rest only on the credit of the authors.

Indeed it did at one time seem that the very thing I ask for was about to be done. In the year 1813, advertisements were circulated announcing an edition of THE CATHOLIC BIBLE, 'explained or illustrated with valuable notes or annotations, according to the interpretation of the Catholic Church, which is our infallible and unerring guide in reading the Holy Scriptures and leading us unto salvation.' The names of all, or almost all, the Irish Roman Catholic bishops were printed as patronizing the undertaking; and, when the work actually appeared, the title-page professed that the edition was sanctioned and patronized by the Roman Catholic prelates and clergy of Ireland. What more could anyone wish than this? But the issue of this attempt to give 'the interpretation of the Catholic Church, which is our infallible and unerring guide in reading the Scriptures,' was so unfortunate that the attempt is not likely to be repeated.

When the promised edition (Macnamara's) appeared, some copies fell into the hands of Protestants, who called attention to the doctrine of the Rhemish notes which they contained. There is no subject to which the annotators so perpetually recur as the duty of the individual to hold no intercourse with heretics that can be avoided, and the duty of the State to punish heretics, and even put them to death.*

* Here are some of them:—

'The good must tolerate the evil where it is so strong that it cannot be redressed without danger and disturbance of the whole Church; and commit the matter to God's judgment in the latter day. Otherwise, where ill men, be they heretics or

The agitation on the subject of the Emancipation Bill was then going on; and this publication threatened seriously to damage the prospects of the Bill, by confirming apprehensions then prevalent as to the use Roman Catholics would be likely to make of any political power they might obtain. Accordingly, the book was denounced by O'Connell, and you will find in his published speeches* that he had no scruple in calling on the Catholic Association to repudiate these notes, which he stigmatized as 'odious,' 'execrable,' 'abominable,' notwithstanding that they had for two hundred years been recognized as approved by high Roman Catholic authority. These 'odious' doctrines have higher

other malefactors, may be punished or suppressed without disturbance and hazard of the good, they may and ought, by public authority, either spiritual or temporal, to be chastised or executed.'—Matt. xiii. 29.

'Not justice nor all rigorous punishment of sinners is here forbidden, nor Elias's fact reprehended, nor the Church or Christian princes blamed for putting heretics to death; but that none of these should be done for desire of our particular revenge, or without discretion and regard of their amendment and example to others.'—Luke ix. 55.

'All wise men in a manner see their falsehood, though for fear of troubling the state of such commonwealths, where unluckily they have been received, they cannot be suddenly extirpated.'—2 Tim. iii. 9.

'If St. Paul doubted not to claim the succour of the Roman laws, and to appeal to Cæsar, the prince of the Romans not yet christened, how much more may we call for the aid of Christian princes and the laws for their punishment of heretics and for the Church's defence against them?'—Acts xxv. 11.

'St. Augustin referreth this "compelling" to the penal laws, which Catholic princes do justly use against heretics and schismatics, proving that they who are by their former profession in baptism subject to the Catholic Church, and are departed from the same after sects, may and ought to be compelled into the unity and society of the universal Church again. And therefore in this sense, by the two former parts of the parable, the Jews first, and secondly the Gentiles that never before believed in Christ, were invited by fair sweet means only; but by the third such are invited as the Church of God hath power over, because they promised in baptism, and therefore are to be revoked not only by gentle means, but by just punishment also.'—Luke xiv. 23. See *infra* the passage quoted from Thomas Aquinas.

'The Protestants foolishly expound this of Rome, for that there they put heretics to death, and allow of their punishment in other countries; but their blood is not called the blood of saints, no more than the blood of thieves, man-killers, and other malefactors, for the shedding of which by order of justice no commonwealth shall answer.'—Rev. xvii. 6.

* Meeting of Catholic Association, Dec. 4, 1817. (*O'Connell's Speeches*, edited by his Son, vol. ii., p. 257.)

authority* in their favour than perhaps Mr. O'Connell was aware of, and I do not think it so easy for the Roman Catholic Church to repudiate them. But Mr. O'Connell was quite right in considering that he was at liberty to reject the opinions of any commentator, however respectable.

(2). Perhaps it may be said that it was needless for the Roman Church to publish commentaries on Scripture, since it is not to Scripture she sends her people for instruction in the doctrines of their faith. She has catechisms and other books of instruction, from which her people may learn. But has she ventured to put her seal of infallibility to any one of them? Not so; catechisms, sermons, books of devotion, are guarded

* It seems to me that the Rhemish annotators had every reason to believe that they were only teaching the doctrine approved by the highest authorities in their Church—doctrine which the Church had never had any hesitation in following in practice. It will suffice to quote here the conclusions come to by Thomas Aquinas (*Summa* 2da 2dae, Qu. xi., Art. 3) on the question, 'utrum haeretici sint tolerandi.' He says, 'The question must be considered as regards the heretics themselves and as regards the Church. On the side of the heretics is sin, for which they deserve not only to be separated from the Church by excommunication, but even to be excluded from the world by death. Now it is a much more grievous thing to corrupt the faith, through which the soul has its life, than to falsify money, which serves the needs of temporal life. So if falsifiers of money, or other malefactors, are at once justly consigned to death by secular princes, far more may heretics, when once convicted of their heresy, be not only excommunicated, but even justly put to death. On the side of the Church there is mercy for the conversion of the erring, and therefore she does not condemn at once, but, as the Apostle says, "after a first and second admonition." But if after that he still continues obstinate, the Church, having no hope of his conversion, provides for the safety of others by separating him from the Church by the sentence of excommunication, and further leaves him to the judgment of secular princes to be exterminated from the world by death.'

On the previous question (Qu. x., Art. 8), 'utrum infideles compellendi sint ad fidem,' his ruling is, that Jews or Gentiles, who have never received the faith, ought not to be compelled to receive it; but that heretics and apostates should be compelled to fulfil what they had promised. On our Lord's words, 'Let both grow together until the harvest,' he makes a comment for which I am sorry to say he is able to quote St. Augustine's authority, that since the reason is given, 'Lest haply while ye gather up the tares ye root up the wheat with them,' it follows that if there is no danger of rooting up the wheat, it is safe to eradicate the tares.

He goes on to consider Qu. xi., Art. 4, whether relapsed heretics ought to be received on their repentance. He regards this question as decided by the Decretal, *Ad abolendam*, 'Si aliqui post abjurationem erroris deprehensi fuerint in abjuratam haeresim recidisse, seculari judicio sunt relinquendi.' He defends this decision as follows: The Church, according to our Lord's precept, extends

by no such gift. If we detect a catechism in manifest error, if we find a preacher or a book of devotion guilty of manifest extravagance, no matter how eminent the man, or how widely popular the book, the Church always leaves a loophole for disowning him, and we are at once told that the infallible authority has spoken by no such medium. But why has she not? Does it not seem strange that a communion possessing the high attribute of infallibility should make no use of it in the instruction of her people? It cannot be said that this neglect does not lead to ignorance and error on the part of the people. I need take no other example than the case I have already mentioned of 'Keenan's Catechism,' where a book circulated by thousands, with the highest episcopal approbation, went on, year after year, teaching doctrine which has

her charity to all, even to her enemies and persecutors. Charity teaches us to wish and work for our neighbour's good. His chief good is the salvation of his soul; consequently the Church admits a relapsed heretic to penance, which opens to him the way of salvation. But it is only in a secondary degree that charity looks to temporal good, such as life in this world, possession of property, and so forth. We are not bound in charity to wish these things to others, except in subordination to the eternal salvation of themselves and others. If one man's possession of any of these good things might hinder the eternal salvation of many, we are not bound to wish it to him, but rather to wish the contrary, both because eternal salvation is to be preferred to any temporal good, and because the good of many ought to be preferred to the good of one. Now if relapsed heretics were kept alive, and allowed to possess property, this might prejudice the salvation of others, both because there is danger of their relapsing again, and infecting others, and because, if they got off without punishment, others might be careless about falling into heresy. So in the case of those who for the first time return from heresy, the Church not only admits them to penance, but keeps them alive, and sometimes, if she believes them to be truly converted, even restores them to the ecclesiastical dignities which they had held before. But relapsing is a sign of instability concerning the faith; so that on a subsequent return to the Church they are admitted to penance, but not freed from the sentence of death.

Accordingly the practice was, that a relapsed heretic who recanted was first strangled, then burnt. If he did not recant he was burned alive, but Bellarmine's biographer, Petrasancta, explains that this was not done out of cruelty, but in the merciful hope that the extremity of bodily suffering might induce the culprit to save his soul by recanting at the last moment (see the passage cited, *Selbstbiographie des Cardinals Bellarmin*, p. 235). In the same place a long list is given of heretics capitally punished at Rome. See also Gibbings, *Were heretics ever burned alive at Rome?* Gibbings remarks, that one of the propositions selected from Luther's writings, and condemned by Pope Leo X. in the Bull *Exsurge*, in 1520, as pestiferous and destructive, &c., is, 'Haereticos comburi est contra voluntatem Spiritus.'

now to be withdrawn as false. The consequence of this neglect is, that those who filled the office of authorized teachers in the Church of Rome were left in such ignorance of its doctrines, that it has now got to be owned that we heretics knew better what were the doctrines of the Roman Church than did its own priests. One Romish controversialist after another, when taken to task about the Roman theory of the Papal power, repudiated as a gross Protestant misrepresentation those doctrines which the Pope, with the assent of the Vatican Council, now tells us are not only true, but have been held by the Church from the beginning. Thus, to quote one controversial book extensively circulated in America: 'Though I have plainly told the Protestant minister that the infallibility of the Pope is no part of the Catholic creed, a mere opinion of some divines, an article nowhere to be found in our professions of faith, in our creeds, and in our catechisms, yet the Protestant minister most ungenerously and uncandidly brings it forward again and again, and takes the opportunity from this *forgery* of his own to abuse the Catholic Church.' 'Here,' says an 'Old Catholic' commentator, 'we have an extraordinary phenomenon: two Protestant ministers, who understood clearly what was the teaching of the Catholic Church on the point in question, and two Catholic priests, writing in defence of the faith, who yet knew nothing about a fundamental doctrine of faith, to say nothing of the bishops and priests who approved of and circulated their works. If this be so,' he says, 'where is the advantage of an infallible Church?' Where, indeed, if those who have not the benefit of its guidance succeed better in arriving at a knowledge of the Church's doctrines than those who have?

(3). Well, perhaps it may be said, it is not from books at all that the Church means her people to learn. To the people in general the voice of the Church is only the voice of the priest. Ordinary laymen certainly cannot study decrees of Popes or Councils, or works on scientific theology. They must take the doctrines of their Church as their authorized teachers expound it to them. Well, are those teachers

infallible? Why, no, is the answer; but practically the people have the full benefit of the gift of infallibility. It is true their priest is not infallible; but they know that, if he teaches any heresy, he will be suspended by his bishop: if the bishop neglect his duty, he will be called to account by the archbishop: if the archbishop be heretical, he will be removed by the Pope. But this statement is only partially true. I believe it is true that any attempt to remove errors from the teaching of the Church of Rome is likely to be summarily checked, and therefore that she is greatly debarred from that best kind of reform—reform from within. But I see no equal safeguard against adding to and exaggerating errors she holds already. It is acknowledged that the faith of the Church may be injured by subtraction. It seems to be practically ignored that the faith may also be injured by addition. Anything that seems like a move in the direction of Protestantism is promptly stopped; but the most extravagant statements in the opposite direction, though perhaps privately censured by the discreet, are not interfered with by authority. On all important subjects the truth is a mean between opposite errors. How then can those teachers possibly have the truth whose only care is to keep as far as they can from one particular form of error?

The most prevalent extravagance of Roman teaching at the present day is an exaggeration of the honour due to the Blessed Virgin Mary. She is represented, in many sermons and popular books of devotion, as almost a fourth Person of the Blessed Trinity, and as a sharer, on nearly equal terms, with our Lord in the work of our redemption. These extravagances are such as to shock one so little disposed to judge harshly of Roman doctrine as Dr. Pusey, and they formed the main subject of his book, *The Eirenicon*. We ask, Is this teaching authorized? and no one can tell us. The infallible guide will not commit himself.

It might seem, however, that he has committed himself. One of the most active teachers of these new doctrines is St. Alphonso dei Liguori, who was canonized by the late Pope. Liguori's writings have been a mark for Protestant attack,

not only on account of his Mariolatry, but also on account of his casuistry. For though in his work on Moral Theology he professes to hold the mean between extreme laxity and extreme rigour, his decisions lean so much to the side of what we count laxity as very much to scandalize weak minds. Now, our first impression is that the Pope is fairly responsible for all Liguori's teaching, for before anyone can be canonized as a saint a most rigorous examination must be made whether his published writings contain anything objectionable. This examination was made in Liguori's case in the year 1803, when he was a candidate for beatification. All his works then came under the examination of the Sacred Congregation of Rites, who decreed that in all the writings of Alphonso dei Liguori, severely examined according to the discipline of the Apostolic See, there was found nothing worthy of censure. And there is testimony that this examination was made with particular severity; that his system of morality had been more than twenty times rigorously discussed by the Sacred Congregation; and that in all their decrees the Cardinals had agreed 'voce concordi, unanimi consensu, una voce, una mente.' Yet we are told that the infallible authority is no way committed to the doctrines of Liguori. Many respectable Roman Catholics do not hesitate to express their dislike both of his decisions on some questions of morality, and of his language concerning the Virgin Mary. Dr. Newman is among the number of those. While professing his incompetence to judge a saint,* seeing that 'the spiritual man judgeth all things, and is himself judged of no man,' he gives his opinion that many things may be suitable for Italy which will not go down in England. The Saint's practical directions were given for Neapolitans, whom he knew, and we do not. With respect to the approbation implied in the decree of the Congregation of Rites, he says, 'Though common sense may determine that the line of prudence and propriety has certainly been passed in the instance of certain statements about the Blessed Virgin, it is often not easy to prove the point legally, and in such cases authority,

* 'Letter to Dr. Pusey,' p. 103.

if it attempt to act, would be in the position which so often happens in our courts of law, where the commission of an offence is morally certain, but the Government prosecutor cannot find legal evidence sufficient to ensure conviction. It is wiser to leave these excesses to the gradual operation of public opinion, that is, to the opinion of educated and sober Catholics, and this seems to be the healthiest way of putting them down' (p. 112). I will postpone, until I have to speak of saint-worship, the discussion whether this attempt to release the Church of Rome from the responsibility of approving Liguori's doctrine is successful: my own opinion is that it is not. And since Dr. Newman wrote, a new difficulty has arisen in the way of relieving Roman Catholics from the responsibility of Liguori's extravagances; for Pius IX., who was himself a thorough Italian, and who did not understand how what is good for Italy should not be good for all the world, elevated Liguori to the rank of Doctor of the Church, that is to say, one of the great divines whose dicta have the highest authority. But for the present purpose we may accept Dr. Newman's account of the matter. If Dr. Newman misunderstands the teaching of the infallible guide whom he has accepted, it is only a stronger proof of what I am asserting, that that guide has an obstinate objection to speaking plainly. It appears, then, from Dr. Newman, that not only is the stamp of infallibility not put on the teaching of ordinary priests, but not even on that of canonized saints. It appears that there are current among Roman Catholics books of devotion which, in the opinion of many, are superstitious and scandalous, not to say blasphemous and idolatrous, and yet the infallible authority refuses to speak a word in condemnation; nay, gives what to most persons would seem approbation of the devotions in question.

(4). I have just alluded to the process of the canonization of saints. A necessary step in that process is, that proof should be given of miracles wrought by the person to be canonized. We are assured that the evidence for such miracles is subjected to the most rigorous examination, and that none are admitted without convincing proof. When such miracles

have passed this test, when they are recited in the Pope's Bull of canonization, as the ground for the honour conferred, when they are inserted in the Breviary, by authority, for the devotional reading of priests, you might suppose then that the infallible authority was pledged to their truth as much as the credit of the New Testament is pledged to the miracles of the Gospels. Not in the least; Roman Catholics are free to accept or reject them as they please. We are told that the historical facts contained in the Breviary, though they merit more than ordinary credence, may be subjected to fresh examination, and may be criticized by private scholars, provided it be done with moderation and respectfulness. In like manner the miracles recited in Bulls of canonization, though they may not be publicly impugned without indecency, yet do not bind a Roman Catholic to actual belief; and if a Protestant, hesitating to become a convert to Popery, should allege, as the ground of his hesitation, the number of lying legends proposed by the Church for his acceptance, he would be told that this is no obstacle at all, and that, as a Roman Catholic, he need not believe any of them.

I am not supposing an imaginary case. Something of the kind occurred in the case of Mr. Ffoulkes, whose name is, no doubt, familiar to you. He tells us of one miraculous story in particular, which we are so uncandid as to reject without examination, and which he subjected to careful investigation. You have all, I dare say, heard the story of the holy house at Loretto. The Virgin Mary's house at Nazareth, when the land fell into the possession of unbelievers, and worshippers could no longer resort to it, was carried by the angels across the seas on the 9th May, 1291 (for I like to be exact), and after taking three temporary resting-places, finally settled down at Loretto in the year 1295. There, on the credit of so great a miracle, it attracted many pilgrims, and was by them enriched with abundant gifts. Several Popes pledged their credit to the truth of the story, and rewarded pious visitors with indulgences. I possess a history of the holy house, written by Tursellinus, a Jesuit, and printed at Loretto itself

in 1837, from which I find that the story is proved by such irrefragable evidence that 'de ea ambigere aut dubitare sit nefas,' and that no one can doubt it who is not prepared to deny the power and providence of God, and to remove all faith in the testimony of man. Mr. Ffoulkes, whose turn of mind was such that he seemed to find it as hard as the holy house itself to find a resting-place, either among Protestants or Roman Catholics, neither accepted this story without inquiry, as might a thorough-going Roman Catholic, nor rejected it without inquiry, as might a thorough-going Protestant. He took the trouble of going both to Loretto and to Nazareth, and making laborious investigations on the spot; and the result of his inquiry was, that he came back thoroughly convinced of the fictitious character of the Santa Casa, notwithstanding the privileges bestowed by so many Popes. On stating this conviction to the excellent French priest who had received him into the Roman communion, his only reply was, 'there are many things in the Breviary which I do not believe myself.'

(5). There is one particular class of miraculous story, however, which deserves special attention, on account of the uses that are made of it—I mean alleged divine revelations. On this authority rest a number of new facts and new doctrines. As an example of new facts, I cannot give you a better instance than the history of one of the most popular saints on the Continent at the present day, Saint Philumena. This saint suffered martyrdom, in the Diocletian persecution, on the 10th August, 286—a date on which I might comment, if the story deserved comment. For excellent reasons this saint was unheard of until quite lately. We learn from the authorized history of her life, that a good Neapolitan priest had carried home some bones out of the Roman catacombs, and was much distressed that his valuable relics should be anonymous. He was relieved from his embarrassment by a pious nun in his congregation, who in a dream had revealed to her the name of the saint and her whole history. I am sorry that I have not time to repeat the story to you; but it

is a tissue of such ludicrous absurdities and impossibilities, that it would be breaking a butterfly on the wheel to prove its falsity; and one would think it could not deceive anyone that was not absolutely a child in respect of critical perception.* Yet this history has been circulated by thousands on the Continent;† and a few years ago, Mr. Duffy, on the quays, published an edition for the instruction of Irish Roman Catholics. This history ascribes the wonderful popularity which St. Philumena undoubtedly obtained, to the number of miracles which she works, and in which she outdoes the oldest saint in the calendar. Yet you will take notice that the evidence for her existence is, that some sixteen centuries after her supposed date a nun dreamed about her a story quite irreconcilable with historic possibilities. This one example will enable you to judge whether it is true that if a priest teaches his people falsehood, his bishop will call him to account, and that if the bishop neglect his duty, the Pope will interfere. This romance of Philumena has been circulated as truth, with the approbation of the highest ecclesiastical authorities.‡ The subject of modern revelations,

* The scholarship of the narrator of the story may be judged of from the fact that the word 'Philumena' is interpreted to mean 'Friend of Light.'

† My authority is a French life of the saint: *La vie et les miracles de Sainte Philomène, surnommée la thaumaturge du* XIX^e *siècle. Ouvrage traduit de l'Italien.* The preface states that the work was made on the invitation of a venerable prelate, and it bears the *imprimatur* of the Bishop of Lausanne, who, 'after the example of a great number of his colleagues in the Episcopate, thinks fit to second the designs of Divine Providence by recommending to his flock the devotion to the holy miracle-worker, Philumena, virgin and martyr, persuaded that it will produce in his diocese, as elsewhere, abundant fruits of sanctification.' The preface claims that the devotion has the sanction of two Popes—Leo XII., who proclaimed the great saint, and Gregory XVI., who blessed one of her images.

‡ In obedience to a decree of Pope Urban VIII., these authorities express themselves with a certain reserve; but they give their approbation to the circulation among their people of works teaching them to act as if the whole story contained nothing but undoubted facts. Here is a specimen of the prayers they are taught to address to a being as imaginary as Desdemona or Ophelia: 'Vierge fidèle et glorieuse Martyre, ayez pitié de moi; exercez et sur mon âme et sur mon corps le ministère de salut dont Dieu vous a jugée digne; mieux de moi vous connaissez la multitude et la diversité de mes besoins: me voici à vos pieds, plein de misère et d'espérance, je sollicite votre charité: ô grande Sainte! exaucez-moi, bénissez-moi,

as a foundation for new doctrines, is so important, that I will not enter on it now, but keep it for the next day.

daignez faire agréer à mon Dieu l'humble supplique que je vous présente. Oui j'en ai la ferme confiance, par vos mérites, par vos ignominies, par vos douleurs, par votre mort, unies aux mérites de la mort et de la passion de JESUS-CHRIST, j'obtiendrai ce que je vous demande,' &c. The work from which I cite gives in conclusion the music of a hymn, the chorus of which is, A Philomène offrons nos voeux; tout est soumis a sa puissance.

Since the above was in type, passing through Reims, I saw a notice in the Cathedral that a novena in honour of St. Philumena was to commence on the Sunday after my visit.

XIII.

MODERN REVELATIONS.

ON the last day I spoke of one use made of modern revelations in the Church of Rome, and gave a specimen how, on the authority of what is there called a revelation, but we should call a dream, a tissue of historical facts is asserted without a particle of historical evidence, or rather in the teeth of historical probability. I told how bishops encourage their flocks to invoke in their prayers the intercession of a person who never had any existence, and even propagate tales of miracles worked by the power of this imaginary personage. It is impossible to doubt that there must be many a Roman Catholic ecclesiastic in high position who does not believe in St. Philumena any more than we do; but it is very common with such persons to regard the excitement of devotional feeling as more important than the truth of the alleged facts which excite it; and so they see no necessity to interfere with the practice of a devotion which appears to them conducive to pious feelings, and to be at least harmless.

But these alleged revelations are also the foundation of new doctrines, and the Pope's silence concerning them affects the whole question of the rule of faith. I do not think that in the Roman Catholic controversy sufficient attention has been given to the place which modern revelations have now taken as part of the foundation of their system. No one can take up modern popular books of Roman Catholic devotion without seeing that their teaching differs as much from that of the Council of Trent, as the teaching of that Council differs from that of the Church of England. Taking notice of this difference was the fundamental idea of Dr. Pusey's book,

The Eirenicon, to which I referred in a former Lecture. He observed how far popular Roman doctrine had got beyond anything that the Council of Trent had authorized, and more particularly so in the place assigned to the Blessed Virgin. Pusey's idea then was to make the Trent decrees a basis of reconciliation: if the Romanists would only confine themselves within Tridentine limits, he hoped to screw up Anglican teaching so far. Whether he would have succeeded in the latter part of his task we need not speculate; for the doctrine of development has now gained too firm a hold of the Roman Church to permit her people to be content to believe now as she believed three hundred years ago. One of the ablest of the Roman Catholic replies to Dr. Pusey was by a Father Harper, originally, I believe, a pervert, now a Jesuit. Pusey had said, 'I doubt not that the Roman Church and ourselves are kept apart much more by that vast practical system which lies beyond the letter of the Council of Trent—things which are taught with a quasi-authority in the Roman Church—than by what is actually defined.' Harper replies (I. lxxvii.), 'It is precisely this practical system, this development of the Tridentine Canons, as Dr. Pusey means it, which is the expression, or rather actuation, of the Church's present indwelling vitality. Dead ideas alone can be hidden up in manuscript; living ideas grow and show fruit. It is precisely in and through this vast practical system, in proportion as it is universal, that the Holy Ghost is working, directing, leading the mind of the Church by degrees into all the truth. Mere formulas, mere written definitions, by themselves are bodies that either have lost animation, or are waiting for it. In the Church they are the expression of her perfected consciousness, on the particular subject of that revealed dogma about which they treat. They live in her spirit and grow with her growth. Like all things else that have an undecaying life, they can never decrease, but must ever increase. Christ grew in wisdom daily. So does the Church, not in mere appearance, but of a truth. Her creed, therefore, can never shrink back to the dimensions of the past, but must ever enlarge with the onward future.' I am not now discus-

sing the truth of the doctrine of development; but you must take that doctrine into account in judging what Romanism at the present day is.

Roman Catholic controversialists have often been in the habit of running away from attacks on the most vulnerable parts of her practical system by saying, 'Oh, the Church is not pledged to that; it is a mere popular abuse;' or, 'It is an unauthorized speculation of some private theologians.' I had already occasion to show how unfair an evasion that was in the case of the dogma of the Pope's personal infallibility. Though controversialists had run away from defending it on the ground of its not having been asserted in any formal decree, and so being only private opinion, yet now we have supreme Roman authority for knowing that the Protestant champions had been quite right in holding that this doctrine, however defective in formal attestation, had all the time been really part of the faith of the Roman Church. Well, this same principle gives us a right to treat the practical system which prevails in the Church of Rome as something for which that Church is responsible. If we point out that popular Romanism is full of superstitions and of belief in what sober, thoughtful Roman Catholics own to be lies, we are told 'these things are not part of the faith of the Church; she has never authoritatively affirmed any of them: the religion of the vulgar is always apt to run into extremes: you must excuse these things in consideration of the real piety which is at the bottom of them.' But though popular Romanism is certainly not the same as the Romanism of the schools, I hold that it is the former which has the best right to be accounted the faith of the Church. Let popular belief come first, and scholastic definition and apology will come in its own good time afterwards. I have already remarked how seldom the infallible authority is exercised to guide men's belief as long as it is doubtful; but usually only comes in when all controversy is over, to ratify the result which public opinion had already arrived at. Is it, then, only the duty of the head of the Church to declare the belief held by his people when it becomes general, or is he to exercise no

superintending care over the influences which form the belief he may afterwards have to declare? If the Pope's infallibility reaches so far as to qualify him for guiding the Church at this stage, he always omits to exercise it. I have said that popular Romanism differs as much from that of the Council of Trent as the latter does from the creed of the Church of England. And I wish now to point out that the difference springs out of a fundamental difference as to the rule of faith. The Thirty-nine Articles appeal to Scripture alone, the Council of Trent to Scripture and tradition; and so it is to be expected that the results should be different when the principles of investigation are different. But the rule of faith of popular Romanism is different again: it is not Scripture and tradition, but Scripture and tradition and modern revelations.

There is a certain development of Christian doctrine which inevitably takes place, but which is quite private and unauthorized. Anyone who thinks much about the things of religion will be sure to make speculations of his own about them, and to draw consequences from generally accepted revealed truths, which consequences may, or may not, be legitimately drawn. Here, according to Newman's theory, would be the place for the infallible authority to interfere to inform the Church which developments are to be accepted. But what actually happens in a number of cases is, that these additions to the structure of Christian doctrine find a shorter road to recognition. Both within and without the Church of Rome it has constantly happened that persons of an excitable and enthusiastic frame of mind, whose thoughts have been much occupied about religion, have supposed themselves to be favoured with miraculous communications from God. Such persons, for instance, were Johanna Southcote among Protestants; St. Gertrude, St. Marie Alacoque, among Roman Catholics. Among Protestants persons of this kind do not find it easy to get anyone to listen to their pretensions; they are joined by no sober-minded persons; they collect a few foolish people for a while, form them into a small sect, and in a few years there is an end to them. But in the Church of

Rome pretenders of this kind not only gather a larger band of followers, but they meet with no opposition—not from those of their own communion even who do not believe in them. Few Roman Catholics would grudge any honour, not even excepting the title of saint, to a pious woman of this kind, even though they do not believe in her asserted revelations. 'She will at least promote the cause of piety; and for their part they do not choose to give scandal to pious minds and triumph to unbelievers by exposing the weaknesses and excesses of faith to an infidel world.' But meanwhile the utterances of these supposed recipients of a revelation are caught up and accepted with implicit faith by others. This will happen when the utterances express only the seer's private speculations. But more usually they are the opinions already favourably thought of in her own little circle, which is therefore prepared to welcome an authoritative enunciation of them; and then with this backing of inspired attestation, belief in them grows so strong and spreads so widely, that Church authorities are no longer free to choose whether or not they will approve of them.

There is in the Roman Church an amazing amount of literature recording revelations such as I have described; but whether these revelations are genuine or not the Pope will not tell, and it is at anyone's choice to accept or reject. Some of the Oxford converts made it a point of honour to show how much they were able to believe, and with what ease they could swallow down what old-fashioned Roman Catholics were straining at. Among these there was none more influential than the late Father Faber (far more so, indeed, than Dr. Newman), whose devotional and theological works had a rapid and extensive sale. You can hardly read half a dozen pages of these without meeting as proof of his assertions, 'Our Lord said to St. Gertrude,' 'It was revealed to St. Teresa,' 'Let us listen to the testimony of God Himself: He made known to a holy nun,' &c.* These quotations are made

* 'Our Lord said to St. Gertrude, that as often as anyone says to God: "My love, my sweetest, my best beloved," and the like, with a devout intention, he receives a pledge of his salvation, in virtue of which if he perseveres he shall receive in

as much as a matter of course as you or I might cite texts of Scripture. A number of new things about Purgatory are stated on this authority, and being incorporated into widely circulated devotional works, pass rapidly into popular belief: for instance, that the Virgin Mary is queen of Purgatory, that the Archangel Michael is her prime minister, that the souls there are quite unable to help themselves, and that our Lord has so tied up His own hands that He is unable to help them except as satisfactions are made for them by living Christians; with a number of other details as to the causes for which souls are sent there, the length of time for which they are punished, and the manner in which they are relieved. I regret to have to mention that, according to the revelations of St. Francesca, bishops seem on the whole to remain longest in Purgatory, and to be visited with the greatest rigour. One holy bishop, for some negligence in his high office, had been fifty-nine years in Purgatory at the date of her information; another, so generous of his revenues that he was named the Almsgiver, had been there five years because, before his election, he had wished for the dignity.*

More recently a French admirer of Father Faber has made a systematic treatise on Purgatory, based on modern revelations. The book is called 'Purgatory, according to the Revelations of the Saints,' by the Abbé Louvet.† I have formed a high opinion both of the piety of the Abbé and of his literary honesty. I praise the latter quality because it is commonly

heaven a special privilege of the same sort as the special grace which St. John, the beloved disciple, had on earth.'—*All for Jesus*, p. 60.

'Our Lord said to St. Teresa, that one soul, not a saint, but seeking perfection, was more precious to Him than thousands living common lives,' p. 117.

'St. Gertrude was divinely instructed, that as often as the Angelic Salutation is devoutly recited by the faithful on earth, three efficacious streamlets proceed from the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, most sweetly penetrating the Virgin's heart,' p. 104.

'Once more let us listen to the testimony of God Himself: A holy nun pressed God in prayer to reveal to her what it was in which His Divine Majesty took so much pleasure in His beloved Gertrude,' &c., p. 323.

* *All for Jesus*, p. 367.

† Le Purgatoire d'après les révélations des Saints, per M. l'Abbé Louvet, Missionaire Apostolique: Paris, 1880.

lightly regarded in Roman Catholic works, of which edification is the main object. Thus, for instance, anyone must be mad who would trust St. Liguori for a reference. If the saint finds anything ascribed to St. Bernard (or thinks he remembers that he does), which is what, in his opinion, St. Bernard ought to have said, he puts it without scruple into his 'Glories of Mary'; and I fancy he would have thought anyone very unreasonable who should have suggested that he ought to give himself the trouble of looking into St. Bernard's works to try whether the passage was there at all, and whether among the genuine or the spurious works. And similarly with the anecdotes which he relates in such numbers. If a story is good and edifying he does not waste his time in trifling investigations, whether there is a particle of historical evidence for the truth of the story. Louvet, on the other hand, inspires me with confidence that his quotations have been correctly given, and that he has taken all the pains he says he has to put aside every apocryphal or doubtful revelation, and to state nothing that is not attested by canonized saints. On Purgatory more than on any other subject the evidence of revelations deserves to be listened to, for the whole faith of the Church of Rome on this subject has been built upon revelations, or, as we should call it in plain English, on ghost stories. For hundreds of years the Church seems to have known little or nothing on the subject. Even still the East has lagged sadly behind the West in her knowledge, and the reason is, that the chief source of Western information is a Latin book, the dialogues of Gregory the Great, a work of which the genuineness has been denied by some, merely because it seemed to them incredible that so sensible a man should have written so silly a book. But no one acquainted with the eccentricities of the human intellect can rely on such an argument, in the face of positive evidence the other way. Gregory, believing twelve or thirteen centuries ago that the end of the world was then near at hand, and that the men of his age, by reason of their nearness to the next world, could see things in it which had been invisible to their predecessors, collected a number of tales of apparitions which, being

received on his authority, have been the real foundation of Western belief in Purgatory. And so Father Faber quotes a namesake of his as saying, 'that although Gregory was a saint who should be loved and honoured on many accounts, yet on none more than this, because he had so lucidly and transparently handed down to us the doctrine of the purgatorial fire; for he thought that if Gregory had not told us so many things of the holy souls, the devotions of subsequent ages would have been much colder in their behalf.'* I don't see, then, why our knowledge of Purgatory should not be enlarged from the same source from which it was first communicated, and why Louvet should not be regarded as doing a good work in collecting all the information that had been received from ghosts who have appeared since Pope Gregory's time; for it is not reasonable to believe that means of communication with the other world which existed in the seventh century have been since completely stopped.† It appears that it is not only that many ghosts have returned to tell of their sufferings, but more saints than one have been permitted to descend to visit the purgatorial regions, and have given us, as Louvet assures us, a complete map of the place. It appears that Purgatory is but one division of the subterranean regions. At the centre of the earth is the place of the damned; above it lies Purgatory, divided into three regions, for the special torments of each of which I must refer you to Louvet. Above Purgatory is the *limbus infantium*, inhabited by unbaptized infants; above that the *limbus patrum*, now empty, but formerly dwelt in by the souls of the patriarchs until the descent of our Lord to release them.

I am sorry to tell you, though you might have gathered it from something that I have said already, that the lowest division is largely tenanted by the souls of priests and bishops, monks and nuns: the bishops with mitres of fire on

* *All for Jesus*, p. 385.

† 'On the subject-matter of Purgatory we may, with less scruple, make use of such revelations from the example of so grave an authority as Cardinal Bellarmine himself, who, in his treatise on Purgatory, as I have already said, always adds some private revelations as a distinct head of proof.'—*All for Jesus*, p. 386.

their heads, a burning cross in their hands, and clad in a chasuble of flames. But it will shock you to hear that in that region are the souls of many popes who, with all the treasure of the Church at their command, were either so thoughtless or so unselfish as to make no provision for their own needs. For example, the venerable Pius VI., in this life, had an unusual share of suffering. He had been dragged from his home by the impious hands of the French Revolution; outraged ignominiously in his twofold dignity of pontiff and king; dragged from city to city as a criminal, and he died the death of a confessor of the faith in 1799. He had done great things as an administrator, struggling with apostolic intrepidity against Gallicanism and Josephism, the two precursors of the Revolution, and in short his long pontificate of twenty-four years was one of the greatest in Church history; yet in 1816, seventeen years after his death, Marie Taigi saw his soul come to the door of Purgatory, and be sent back again into the abyss, his expiation not being yet finished. How long is it still to last? That is the secret of God. We know from the same source that Pius VII., who suffered so much at the hands of the first Napoleon, and who was so worthy and holy a pontiff that he won the respect even of unbelievers, remained in Purgatory nearly five years. Leo XII. escaped after a few months, on account of his eminent piety and the short time he had held the awful responsibility of the pontificate. I will not delay to speak of Benedict VIII., but will go on to tell what, as Louvet says, is really frightful, and what one would not dare to believe if we had not as guarantees St. Lutgarde, whose prudence and discretion are known, and Cardinal Bellarmine, who, having studied as a theologian all the details of this revelation, declares that he cannot doubt of it, and that it makes him tremble for himself. That great pontiff, Innocent III., who held the Lateran Council, who passed for a saint in the eyes of men, and did so much for the reform of the Church, appeared to St. Lutgarde, all surrounded by flames, and on her expressing her astonishment, informed her that he had narrowly escaped hell, and that he had been condemned to suffer in Purgatory

till the end of the world. He earnestly entreated her prayers, whereupon St. Lutgarde, with all her nuns, set themselves with all their might to make intercession for his deliverance; but no sign came that their prayers were answered, and, for all we know, after five centuries the poor wretch may be still plunged in those horrible pains from which he begged so earnestly to be delivered. 'This example,' says Bellarmine, 'fills me with real terror every time I think of it.'*

Louvet makes a calculation, by the help of his revelations, how long an ordinary Christian may expect to have to stay in Purgatory. I cannot trouble you with the details of his proof, but his result is, that a Christian of more than usual sanctity, who has never committed a mortal sin, who has carefully avoided all the graver venial sins, and has satisfied by penance for three-fourths of the lighter sins into which frailty has led him, must expect to spend in Purgatory 123 years, 3 months, and 15 days. 'A truly terrifying result,' says Louvet; 'for if it is so with righteous souls, what will become of poor sinners like me?'†

But these 123 years are only years of earthly measurement; they would be more than centuries if measured by the sensations of the suffering souls. This Louvet proves by several authentic histories. One is of two priests who loved each other like brethren. It was revealed to one on his death-bed that he should be released from Purgatory the first Mass that was offered for him. He sent for his friend, and made him promise that he would lose no time after his death in fulfilling the conditions of his release. The friend promised, and the moment the sick man expired, flew to the altar, and celebrated the Mass with all the devotion he was capable of. Immediately afterwards, his friend appeared to him radiant with glory, but with an air of reproach on his countenance. 'O faithless friend,' he cried, 'you would deserve to be treated with the same cruelty you have exercised towards me! Here I have been years in the avenging flames, and to think that neither you nor one of my brethren should have had the

* *Louvet*, p. 124. † *Ibid.*, p. 178.

charity to offer a single Mass for me!' 'Nay,' returned his friend, 'you had no sooner closed your eyes than I fulfilled my promise; and you may satisfy yourself by examining your body, which you will find is not yet cold.' 'Is that so?' returned the deceased. 'How frightful are the torments of Purgatory when one hour seems more than a year!' Another case was that of an abbot who, on returning from a journey, found that the most promising of his young monks had just died. As the abbot was praying in the choir after matins he saw a phantom enveloped in flames. 'O charitable Father,' said the novice, with deep groans, 'give me your blessing. I had committed a small breach of rule, not a sin in itself. As this is the only cause of my detention in Purgatory, I have been allowed by special favour to address myself to you. You are to impose my penance, and I shall then be released.' The abbot replied: 'As far as it depends on me, my son, I absolve you, and give you my blessing; and for penance, I appoint you to stay in Purgatory till the hour of prime:' that was the next service, usually held at eight o'clock in the morning. At these words the novice, filled with despair, ran shrieking through the church, crying: 'O merciless father! O heart pitiless towards your unhappy son! What! for a fault for which in my lifetime you would have thought the lightest penance enough, to impose on me so fearful a penalty. Little do you know the atrocity of the sufferings of Purgatory.' And shrieking out, 'O uncharitable penance!' he disappeared. The abbot's hair stood on end with horror; gladly would he have recalled his severe sentence. But the word had been spoken. At last a happy thought struck him. He rang the bell; called up his monks; told them of the facts, and celebrated the Office of prime immediately. But all his life he retained the impression of this horrible scene, and often said that till then he had had no idea of the punishments of the other world, and could not have imagined that a few hours in Purgatory could form so fearful an expiation.

But we shall be less disposed to pity the souls in Purgatory when we learn what exceptional good fortune it is to get there. To the question, 'Are there few that be saved?'

Louvet would return a most gloomy answer. His arguments and calculations are very interesting, but would take me too long to repeat. But (p. 26) he clinches his opinion by a revelation. St. Bernard, it appears, was privileged on two successive days to stand by the judgment-seat of God, and hear the sentences pronounced on all the souls that died on these two days. He was horrified to find that of 80,000 souls only three souls of adults were saved the first day, and only two on the second; and that of these five not one went direct to heaven: all must visit Purgatory.

Louvet, as I have said, builds his speculations solely on the evidence of canonized saints. If he had been content with authentic history, he might have used the following, to which we, at least, ought to take no exception, since the credit of our own country is pledged to its truth.* The Roman Breviary of 1522 relates that St. Patrick, having fasted, like Elias, forty days and forty nights, on the top of a mountain, asked two things of God: first, that at the day of judgment there should not remain a single Irishman on the earth; the other, that God would show him the state of souls after death. Then the Lord led him to a desert place, and showed him a certain dark and deep pit, and said, 'Whosoever shall remain in this cave a day and a night shall be delivered from all his sins.' This passage of the Roman Breviary was afterwards suppressed, then restored, then finally suppressed again, on account of the evil comments of Protestants and Rationalists. 'But,' says Louvet, 'the old Parisian and other local Breviaries accept the story; so do the historians of the Church of Ireland, and, above all, the Bollandists, with their grave authority. And besides, there remain so many histories of actual descents into this purgatory, that unless we accuse a great and illustrious Church of knavery and imbecility, we must admit that the story has a foundation of historic fact. The routine of the descent into this purgatory was as follows: none was permitted to descend without the sanction of his bishop, who did all in his power to dissuade every applicant

* *Louvet*, p. 42.

from the attempt, reminding him of what was very true, that many had made the venture who had never come back. If, notwithstanding, the postulant persevered, the bishop gave him a letter to the prior of the monastery which was at the place, who also tried to turn him aside from the dangerous enterprise. If the candidate persisted, he was shut up in the church for fifteen days' fasting and prayer; then, confessed and communicated, was sprinkled with holy water, and led in procession, with singing of litanies, to the mouth of the grotto. There the prior made a last appeal. If the candidate persevered, he received the prior's blessing, crossed himself, and disappeared in the darkness. The prior waited a little to see if he would come back. If not, they shut the door and returned in procession to the church. Next day they returned, with processions and litanies as before. If the adventurer was there, they led him back, singing the *Te Deum;* if not, they returned the next morning: if he did not then appear, the prior sadly locked the door of the abyss, and they gave him up for lost. Some successful adventurers have left records of the sufferings of Purgatory, which they not only saw, but participated in; but Louvet, as I said, declines to use these histories in his treatise. Any of you who have read Carleton's story of the Lough Derg Pilgrim will have learned how the descent was conducted in our degenerate days.

Before I part with Louvet, I must mention another reference of his to Irish history. You may have heard of Malachi, who 'wore the collar of gold which he won from the proud invader.' Alas! the true history of the collar of Malachi is very different from Tommy Moore's version. An Irish bishop, praying after his office, saw a pale spectre with a collar of flames about his neck. This was Malachi. He had misused his kingly power; and, to bend his confessor to culpable indulgence, had bribed him with a ring of gold. For punishment he had now to wear this ring of flame about his neck. And his confessor could give him no help; for he was himself condemned to wear a heavier and more painful one. You will be glad to hear that after some months of

prayers the bishop was able to obtain relief for the two sufferers.*

These extracts, long as they have been, give you a very faint idea of the mass of information about Purgatory made known by revelations which respected priests, writing with all the air of grave historians,† relate for the edification of their flocks, in books bought up by thousands. A companion volume to that on Purgatory might easily be made on the revelations about the Virgin Mary, in which the modest doctrine of the Council of Trent, that it is useful to invoke her intercession, is rapidly being improved into the doctrine, that no one who does invoke it can be lost, and no one who does not can be saved. One would think we had a right to know from the infallible authority whether these revelations and the doctrine which they contain ought to be received or not; but he remains silent. Those who, like Father Faber and Louvet, receive these revelations as Scripture, obtain commendation for their piety; but one who treats these stories with complete disregard is visited with no official censure, whatever suspicions private individuals may entertain of the coldness of his faith. But all the time, on the strength of stories which the supreme authority will neither affirm nor deny, beliefs are being silently built up in the Church on which he is likely hereafter to be asked to put his seal.

In the Roman Church the idea seems to be now abandoned of handing down the Faith 'once for all (ἅπαξ) delivered to the saints.' It is a vast manufactory of beliefs, to which addition is being yearly made. And as when you go into some great manufactory you may be shown the article in all its stages: the finished product, with the manufacturer's stamp upon it; the article near completion, and wanting hardly anything but the stamp; the half-finished work; the raw materials out of which the article is made; so it is in the Roman Church. There you have the finished article: dogmas pro-

* *Louvet*, p. 79.

† Louvet says of one of his authorities, 'impossible de rien lire de plus sûr comme authenticité et comme véracité,' p. 76.

nounced by Pope and Council to be *de fide*, which none may deny on pain of damnation. But there are, besides, articles *fere de fide*, not yet actually proclaimed by infallible authority to be necessary to salvation to be believed in, yet wanting nothing else but official promulgation—so generally received, and acknowledged by such high authorities, that to contradict them would be pronounced temerarious, and their formal adoption by the Church seems to be only a question of time. Somewhat below these in authority, but still very high, are other doctrines supported by such grave doctors that it would be a breach of modesty to contradict them. Below these again, other things owned to be still matters of private opinion, but which seem to be working their way to general belief, and which, if they should win their way to universal acceptance, will deserve to be proclaimed to be the faith of the Church. It is needless to say what help is given towards such general recognition of a doctrine, if a canonized saint, whom it is impossible to suspect of deceit, and disrespectful to suspect of delusion, declares that he has been taught the truth of the doctrine by revelation from heaven. It is inevitable that a doctrinal statement so commended, if no disapprobation of it is expressed by higher authority, comes to the Church with such a weight of recommendation that it can hardly help becoming the prevalent opinion: and then, in process of time, how can the head of the Church refuse to declare that to be the faith of the Church which the great majority of its members, including perhaps himself, believe to be true? If the supreme authority puts off its interference to the last stage, that interference comes altogether too late. It is useless to teach the Church when the Church has already made up its mind.

And surely if Christ has left a vicar upon earth, what more appropriate function can he have than that of informing the world how to distinguish the voice of Christ from that of false pretenders who venture to speak in his name? Anyone who claims to have received a revelation from God must be either as much deluded as Johanna Southcote, or as much inspired as St. Paul. If there be any

in the later Church to whom God has made real revelations, we are bound to receive the truths so disclosed with the same reverence and assent which we give to what was taught by the Apostles. It is important for us to know whether the book of God's revelation has closed with the Apocalypse of St. John, or are we to add to the inspired volume the revelations of St. Francesca, St. Gertrude, and St. Catherine. If these last are real revelations, they who reject them are doing their souls the same injury as if they rejected the books of Scripture. We look to the infallible authority for guidance, but he owns himself to be as helpless as ourselves to distinguish the true prophet from the false pretender, and gives us leave to believe or reject as we like. Nay, he gives a kind of ambiguous approval: he honours the recipients of the alleged revelations, canonizes them as saints, encourages his children to ask their intercession, now that they are dead: but if questioned did these persons, when they were alive, deceive the people by teaching them their own fancies as if they were divine revelations, he declares this a question outside his commission to answer. It is clear that he does not really believe in his own infallibility.*

* An answer to what is here said has been lately attempted by Father Ryder (*Nineteenth Century*, Feb., 1887). In the *Contemporary Review* for October, 1883, I had complied with a wish expressed by some friends that I should put on paper some things that I had told them in conversation in which they had been interested, namely, what I had read in then recent publications by the Abbés Cloquet and Louvet. My article was written without any controversial intention, and was almost entirely confined to a simple report of what these writers had said. But in writing about Louvet I had saved myself trouble by making use of the present Lecture, which had been written and delivered a couple of years previously; and the only part of my article that can be called controversial was where I copied some of the remarks made above, on the fact that the Church of Rome has shown herself unwilling or unable to pronounce officially on the credit due to alleged modern revelations.

Father Ryder gives an excellent illustration of what I have said as to the habit of controversialists, when at a loss for something better to say, of laboriously proving what their opponents do not deny. He says that I 'admit in words' that the Church of Rome does not pledge herself to the truth of any modern revelations, and then, as if I did not admit it in reality, he occupies in the proof of this statement great part of the space which he devotes to me. Surely, in the three years and more that he took to meditate on my article, he might have discovered that the complaint I had made was that the Church of Rome does *not* tell us whether we are to believe

I ought not to dismiss this subject of revelations without reminding you of the first occasion when an attempt was made to impose such private revelations as a rule of faith on the Church. I mean, in the Montanist heresy. The Montanists, you know, were perfectly orthodox. They had not the least desire to alter the ancient faith of the Church. They only aimed at a development of Christian doctrine; according as prophets to whom the Paraclete revealed the Divine will cleared up anything that had been obscure in the apostolic teaching, or guarded the purity of the Church by supplemental commands which the Church, on its first formation, had not had strength to bear. But the Montanists held, and as it seems to me with good reason, that the recipient of a Divine revelation was not justified in looking on it as given only for his private edification. It was both his privilege and his duty to make known to the Church what God had taught him; and any who refused to hear rejected a message from God. So the Montanist prophecies came to be written down and circulated as demanding to be owned as God's word. This was what more than anything else led the heads of the Church to oppose people whose aims and doctrines

these things or not; and the question why she does not deserves some better reply than, she doesn't because she doesn't.

Then he has recourse to a 'tu quoque'—but about this I need not dispute, since, clearly, he would establish my case, not his own, if he could show that the Church of Rome behaves exactly as a Church behaves which makes no pretensions to infallibility.

He blames me for quoting the positive acceptance given by Father Faber to modern revelations 'in an uncontroversial work intended to assist the imaginative piety of his readers.' It is strange that Roman divines do not find out how they repel Protestants by the defective appreciation of the claims of truth exhibited in their distinction as to what may be said in controversial and uncontroversial books. To people of their own community they assert things as positive facts which they run away from defending the moment an opponent grapples with them. It would seem as if their maxim was, 'We need not be particular about the truth of what we say if no one is present who can contradict us.'

He says that the Church is only directly concerned with the deposit entrusted to her at Pentecost. With regard to any other statement, she does no more than say whether or not it contradicts the doctrine of that deposit. I wish the Church of Rome did confine herself to the doctrine delivered to her at Pentecost; but since the publication of Newman's Essay on Development, the 'quod semper' of Vincent of Lérins is thrown completely overboard, and Romish divines speak with as much disdain of a Church which is satisfied to abide by its old creed, as a fashionable lady does of one

were all such as religious and orthodox men could sympathize with. But it was felt, and truly felt, that their prophecies were encroaching on the supreme authority of Scripture, and that they were presuming to add to what had been written. From the time of the breaking out of Montanism, greater care was taken than had been used before, to prevent any unauthorized uninspired composition from seeming to be placed on a level with Scripture. And so the Epistle of Clement, the Shepherd of Hermas, and one or two writings more, which had been admitted into Church reading, were then excluded, and fell so rapidly into such neglect, that copies have scarcely survived to our day. And it is the real truth that those who accept these modern revelations, and draw proofs of doctrines from them, have really a different Bible, not only from us, but from the Council of Trent. The Church of Rome is but dissembling a schism when she allows differences to remain unsettled, affecting the very foundations of faith: when what is accepted by one as the voice of God Himself is set down as a dream of silly women by another.

In what I have said I have only contemplated revelations made in visions to their recipients, belonging thus to the class of what may be called invisible miracles. But there

who appears in the dress she wore last season. See the passage quoted from Father Harper, p. 202, and another in this very article of Father Ryder.

Finally, he denies that the new things taught by modern revelations can properly be called doctrines. I do not know how else to call them. What I understand by 'doctrines' is 'revealed facts.' If God has really revealed anything, our obligation to believe it is all the same, no matter who the organ may be through whom the revelation was made; whether it be St. John or St. Paul, St. Bridget or St. Catherine. Our only concern is to know whether or not a real revelation has been made. The Church of Rome is willing to tell her people that they are bound to believe what is delivered to them by St. John and St. Paul. Why will she not give the same information with regard to things which later persons, whom she honours as saints, profess to have received by divine revelation?

It cannot be said that these things do not affect practice. One specimen is enough. It is asserted that it was revealed through St. Simon Stock that no one who dies wearing the scapular can possibly be lost: 'in quo quis moriens æternum non patietur incendium.' Surely the revelation of a certain means of escaping the flames of hell deserves to be called a doctrine, if anything can. Other things are taught about Purgatory on the same authority which, if true, ought seriously to affect practice. Why will not the infallible authority tell us positively whether we are to believe these things or not?

have been, in my own recollection, miracles of still higher pretensions; yet concerning these, too, the infallible authority will not tell us what to think. I address an audience so much junior to myself, that some of the things I remember as having at the time made the greatest sensation are to you forgotten stories of things that happened before you were born; yet they serve well to illustrate the practical working of the Roman system. I can call to mind more revelations than one, not hidden away in biographies of saints, whence they can be drawn forth by enthusiastic preachers, but coming forth into the world, forcing their way into the newspapers, and challenging even the investigation of the law courts.

The miracle of La Salette took place 19th September, 1846. Two children minding cows on a lonely mountain in the diocese of Grenoble were surprised by the apparition of a fine lady robed in a splendid yellow dress, wearing varnished shoes, and with a head-dress of ribbons and flowers. She told them that she was the Virgin Mary; discoursed to them on the sins of France, and gave them messages in the name of her Son. The children told the story: the matter was noised abroad; pilgrimages were made to the scene of the occurrence; the place soon became crowded with visitors; chapels arose; inns were opened, medals were struck, the sale of the water of La Salette soon came to be a gainful traffic, for it had not only virtue in curing diseases, but a few drops even operated the conversion of an obstinate sinner, in whose liquor it had been mixed without his knowledge. Among the pilgrims was Cardinal Newman's friend and diocesan, Bishop Ullathorne of Birmingham. He published an account of his visit, professing full belief in the reality of the miracle. He opened at Stratford-on-Avon a chapel to our Lady of La Salette, and introduced the Confraternity of La Salette into his diocese. His pamphlet claims Papal sanction for the new devotion. By a Brief, dated 26th August, 1852, the Pope, as we are told, made the altar of La Salette a privileged altar, gave a plenary indulgence to visitors to the shrine, besides other privileges too tedious to enumerate. A priest of Bishop Ullathorne's, a Mr. Wyse, published under

the bishop's sanction a Manual of the Confraternity of La Salette. Mr. Wyse remonstrates indignantly with those of his co-religionists who still withhold faith from the story. 'The truth of the apparition of La Salette,' he says, 'is incontestable; the proofs are such that it is worthy of the fullest belief. Yet because it is not of faith, that is to say, because a man will not be damned for not believing it, the faith of some who call themselves Catholics is so ungenerous and thrifty, that they refuse their assent.' 'In matters of faith,' he tells us, 'God loves a cheerful giver: He is not pleased with those who seek what is the very minimum of belief which will secure their salvation. In these days of infidelity, supernatural faith, cultivated for safety's sake to the very utmost, is the only security against the vilest errors.'

This language expresses a state of feeling I believe to be very common among Roman Catholics; but surely it is very absurd. It is accounted faith not only to believe all that God says, but also to believe anyone who says that God has said a thing. Should I account it a compliment if anyone told me that he had such faith in me that he would not only believe anything I said, but anything that anyone said I said? The result certainly would be, that although no one has any particular motive to misrepresent me, he would believe a good deal I never said, and some things I should be sorry to be thought to have said. It is really not faith in the Divine Word, but want of faith, if the belief which is due to a divine revelation is thoughtlessly given to anyone who claims it. A man could not think much of his dog's attachment to him if he was a dog that would follow anybody.

In the present case the result proved that a certain suspension of judgment might be pardonable. Some of the clergy of the neighbouring dioceses declared the whole apparition to be an imposture, and denied (I am sure I do not know whether with truth or not) that the Pope had given the alleged approbation. The Salettites declared that this was envy and jealousy on the part of men whose own shrines had suffered a decrease of pilgrims, in consequence of the superior attractions of the new shrine. Then their adversaries pro-

ceeded to particulars. It was asserted that the virgin who appeared to the children was a certain Constance Lamerlière, a nun, half knave, half crazy, who could be proved to have purchased the dress in which the Virgin appeared, and whose connexion with the apparition could in other ways be proved. This was stated so persistently that Constance Lamerlière was forced to accept the challenge, and bring an action for defamation of character; but the Court decided against her, and the decision was confirmed on appeal. I shall not pretend that the decision was conclusive, for I believe that there are still Roman Catholics who believe in La Salette; but I fear that the apparition must be pronounced a failure, as having caused more scandal to unbelievers than edification to the faithful, unless the large pecuniary gains it brought to the parties interested may redeem it from the charge of being altogether a failure.

Scarcely had the excitement provoked by the events of La Salette begun to subside, when the supernaturalist party dealt a heavier blow against their opponents by what was called the miracle of Lourdes. In this spot, in Gascony, Bernadotte Soubirous, a poor girl of fourteen, on February 11, 1858, while picking up dry wood, saw a beautiful lady robed in white, with a blue sash, and the vision was afterwards several times repeated. On being asked who she was, the lady answered, 'I am the Immaculate Conception.' She invited the girl to drink at a fountain. The child, seeing no fountain, scraped away some earth with her hands. A little water filtered through the orifice: it increased gradually in volume, became perfectly clear, and now supplies to the faithful I do not know how many millions of bottles, which are in large demand for the purpose of effecting supernatural cures. The local bishop gave his sanction to the miracle; pilgrimages to the shrine were organized, and pilgrimages are now made easy. It is not, as in former days, when a devout pilgrim had to walk over half Europe with or without peas in his shoes. Railway Companies are only too glad to organize excursion trains, and secure for their line an undue share of the tourist traffic. Only the other day the chairmen of the other

Companies were looking with envy at the profits the Midland Great Western Company were deriving from the miracles at Knock.* True, there is a number of incredulous people who object that the witness to the Lourdes miracle is a child subject to hallucinations; and the speech 'I am the Immaculate Conception,' does put a severe strain on one's faith. It is said, however, that the miracles worked by the intercession of Our Lady of Lourdes ought to banish all incredulity. But what I complain of is, that when there is an infallible guide he will not interfere to clear our doubts. Why should he leave us in danger of mistaking the utterances of a crazy nun or the ravings of a hysteric child for miraculous communications from the Blessed Virgin; or, conversely, of rejecting a message from heaven?

Perhaps one reason why we must despair of getting a solution of our doubts from this quarter is, that infallibility is said to be subject to an unfortunate limitation. The Pope, though infallible on questions of doctrine, is liable to be deceived by human testimony about a matter of fact. You may remember reading in Burnet of the use made of this distinction in the Jansenist controversy. The adversaries of the Jansenists had obtained a papal condemnation of certain propositions from the work of Jansenius. As devout Catholics, the Jansenists were forced to confess that the doctrines condemned by the Pope were false, but they saved the credit of their master by saying that these propositions had not been asserted by him, at least not in the erroneous sense. Their adversaries, determined not to permit themselves to be thus balked of their

* A small village in the county of Mayo, where the Virgin Mary, St. Joseph, and a third personage, supposed to be St. John, are affirmed to have appeared to many persons on the evening of 21st August, 1879, and in the early days of 1880. The scene of the alleged apparitions was the exterior of the southern gable of the sacristy attached to the Roman Catholic chapel of the parish. See *The Apparitions and Miracles at Knock*, by John Mac Philpin (Dublin: Gill & Son, 1880); in which tract will be found a full account of the matter, with the depositions of witnesses made before a commission of priests appointed by the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Tuam, and the particulars of many miraculous cures reported by the Roman Catholic priest of Knock as having been effected in blind, crippled, and diseased persons who have visited the chapel, or swallowed particles of mortar taken from the wall.

triumph, obtained from the Pope a supplemental decree, declaring that the propositions in question were not only erroneous, but that they had been taught by Jansenius. To this the Jansenists replied, 'We acknowledge the Pope to be infallible in questions of doctrine, but the question whether Jansenius taught such and such doctrines is one of fact, and we say that on this the Holy Father has been deceived.'

I own I do not myself see the justice of the distinction, nor how it is rational to give up the infallibility in the one case and assert it in another. If this limitation exists, how can any heretic be infallibly condemned? The falsity of his doctrines may be infallibly asserted; but whether he had taught them will admit of controversy. In several doctrinal questions which came before the Privy Council, it was found to be easier by far to ascertain what the doctrine of the Church of England was than whether the impeached clergymen had contravened it. But it is more important to observe that the doctrines of our religion are all assertions of the occurrence of facts. That our Lord died, and was buried, and rose again the third day, are all matters of fact. The question which, it was said, was to have been determined if the Vatican Council had not been prematurely broken up, whether or not the body of the Virgin was miraculously taken up to heaven, is a question of fact. If the Pope is unable to arrive at certainty about things alleged to have taken place in his own lifetime, how can he expect to be more successful about things that happened centuries ago? There is a story about a grave writer who abandoned in despair a contemplated historical work, when he found himself unable to ascertain the real facts of a quarrel which had taken place under his own windows. But yet again, those miracles of modern times, though the question of the reality of their occurrence may be one of fact, are made the foundation of doctrines and practices the reception of which must surely be affected by our acceptance or rejection of the facts. Thus, in the instance last given, if we believe that the Virgin Mary really said to a little girl, 'I am the Immaculate Conception,' however odd we may think her way of expressing herself, we cannot doubt

that she meant to give her approval to the doctrine that she was conceived without sin, and so that the truth of that doctrine must be regarded as miraculously guaranteed.

Shortly after the pilgrimages to Lourdes others were organized to Paray-le-Monial. This had been the scene of the revelations of the blessed Marguerite Marie Alacoque, the foundress of the now popular devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. This is not, like the other two I mentioned, a revelation of our own time, though a great impetus was given to that devotion by the beatification of this nun by Pius IX. She lived at the end of the seventeenth century, the time when the strife between the Jesuits and the Jansenists was the hottest. Her revelations were patronized by the Jesuits and condemned by the Jansenists. With the late Pope the Jesuits were all-powerful. It is curious that the origin of this Jesuit devotion seems to be fairly traceable to a Puritan divine, Goodwin, who was chaplain to Oliver Cromwell. Goodwin published books in which he dwelt much, in rather mystical language, on the point that our Lord's manhood remains still united to His Divinity, and that He still retains His human heart and feelings. The priest who afterwards became director to the nun of whom I speak was for a considerable time in England, attached to the household of the Duke of York, afterwards James II., so that he might easily have become acquainted with Goodwin's writings. The poor nun herself was subject to what we heretics would call hysteric delusions, in the course of which she saw many visions in which, as always happens, the ideas of her waking hours were reproduced. All that Goodwin had said metaphorically about our Lord's human heart was materialized and referred to that physical portion of our Lord's human frame. As a specimen, I mention one of the most celebrated of her visions, in which she saw our Lord's heart in His bosom burning as in a furnace, and her own heart placed as a small atom of fire in that furnace. You cannot pass by a Roman Catholic picture-shop without observing what vogue the adoration of the material heart of our Lord has now gained. It was much opposed by the Jansenists, so that it was not till

after a century and a-half that Margaret Mary obtained, under Pius IX., the dignity of beatification, which is next below canonization. It has been objected that this worship of a portion of our Lord's Body is downright Nestorianism. In the course of the Nestorian controversy it was distinctly condemned to make a separation between our Lord's Godhead and His manhood, so as to offer worship to the one not addressed to the other. And here the worship is not even offered to our Lord's entire humanity, but to a part of it. However, the lawfulness of this worship is not what I am discussing now. My object is to show that every one of these alleged revelations has a distinct bearing upon doctrine. Of course, however objectionable this superstitious worship may appear to us, if our Lord has revealed His approval of it, our objections must be dismissed; and so an infallibility which owns itself incompent to pronounce on the reality of alleged revelations really owns itself incompetent to pronounce on questions of doctrine which these revelations would seriously affect. So much it may well suffice to have said about the hesitations and vacillations of the infallible guide. I had intended to say something about positive errors into which he has fallen, but these I must reserve till next day.

XIV.

THE BLUNDERS OF THE INFALLIBLE GUIDE.

I HAVE thought it well to let you see how the theory of an infallible Church works in practice. In the former Lectures I have given proof enough that in a number of cases the guide who asks us to follow him prefers himself to follow, and shows by his hesitations that he is ignorant of the true path. I will now add some cases where he has actually struck into wrong paths, and has been compelled, with very lame apologies, to retrace his steps. I reserve the question whether Popes ever have been heretics until I come to speak of that theory which ascribes infallibility to the Pope personally. One instance, however, in which a Pope was compelled to retire with disgrace, after having attempted to thrust his infallibility into a sphere in which it failed to secure correctness, is the department of Biblical criticism.

The Council of Trent having stamped the Vulgate as 'authentic,' ordered that a correct edition of this authorized Vulgate should be published. But little was done in fulfilment of this decree for nearly forty years, when the task was undertaken by Pope Sixtus V., a Pontiff who seems really to have believed in his own infallibility. He employed a Board of learned men to act as revisers, but in complete subordination to himself. In his preface he claims the superiority to them which he exercised, as resulting from the singular privilege which he enjoyed as successor to Peter, the Prince of the Apostles, for whom Christ prayed that his faith should not fail, and who was charged to confirm the other Apostles in the faith. Accordingly, he tells with complacency of the labour which, among all his other apostolic cares, he had

spent on this work, day after day, and for several hours each day, reading the collections and opinions of others, and balancing the reasons for the various readings; the plan of the work being, that while his learned revisers collected the evidence, it was for him alone to decide on the validity of their arguments, and determine by his absolute judgment what reading was to be preferred to what. When the work was printed he examined each sheet with the utmost care, and corrected the press with his own hand. The edition appeared in 1590, with a Constitution prefixed, in which Sixtus affirmed the plenary authority of the edition for all future time ('hac nostra perpetuo valitura constitutione'). 'By the fulness of apostolic power,' he says, 'we decree and declare that this edition, approved by the authority delivered to us by the Lord, is to be received and held as true, lawful, authentic, and unquestioned, in all public and *private* discussion, reading, preaching, and explanations.' He forbids the printing of this Bible for the space of ten years at any press but his own in the Vatican. After that time it might be printed elsewhere, but only from one of the Vatican copies. He forbade expressly the publication of various readings in copies of the Vulgate, and pronounced that all readings in other editions and manuscripts, which might vary from those of this Sixtine edition, should have no credit or authority for the future. It was forbidden to alter the version in the smallest particle; and any person who should violate this Constitution, it was declared, would incur the indignation of Almighty God, and of His blessed Apostles Peter and Paul; and was threatened with the greater excommunication, not to be absolved except by the Pope himself.

This was the language of a man who really believed in his infallibility. But a glance at the volume was sufficient to convince any moderately learned man of the folly, not to say impiety, of such boastful presumption. Many passages were found covered with slips of paper on which new corrections had been printed; others were scratched out and merely corrected with a pen; and different copies were corrected in different ways. A closer

examination showed those competent to judge that the edition had graver faults than could be accounted for by printers' carelessness. Sixtus had changed the readings of those whom he had employed to report upon the text with the most arbitrary and unskilful hand; and it was scarcely an exaggeration to say with Bellarmine that his precipitate self-reliance had brought the Church into the most serious peril. The death of Sixtus removed all constraint, and the learned divines whose opinions had been overruled represented the true state of the case to his successor. There was then much embarrassment how to correct these undeniable errors; and some men of weight advised the Pope to prohibit the use of the faulty books. But Bellarmine counselled that the credit of Sixtus should be saved; thereby, as he says in his autobiography, returning good for evil; for Sixtus, for a reason of which I may speak later, had put Bellarmine's *Controversiæ* on the Index of prohibited books, 'donec corrigerentur.' Bellarmine's way of solving the difficulty was to lay the blame upon the printers,* although in his autobiography he makes no secret that those errors had been deliberately introduced by Sixtus himself, which he recommended should be imputed to the carelessness of others. Indeed Bellarmine's original proposal was a delightful illustration of the skill which the Order to which he belonged is popularly believed to possess, in knowing how to insinuate a falsehood in words consistent with truth. He recommended that the faulty readings should be said to have occurred 'præ festinatione vel typographorum *vel aliorum*'—either the printers were to blame or *somebody else*. However, this evasion

* If an author has sometimes had good reason to complain, in the words of the celebrated *erratum*, 'printers have persecuted me without a cause,' the present case is one of several in which authors have taken their revenge on printers by trying to make them responsible for their own errors. A signal example is the virtuous indignation displayed by Warburton against his critic, Edwards, who had been 'such a dunce or a knave,' as to imagine that the editor, not the printers, was responsible for the well-known blunder in Warburton's edition of Shakespeare. Pope's statement that the story of 'Measure for Measure' had been taken from the 5th novel of the 8th decade of Cinthio's novels, is printed in Warburton's edition with the abbreviations 'Dec.' and 'Nov.,' written at full length, thus: 'Cinthio's novels, December 8, November 5.'

was disdained in the preface to the new edition, written by Bellarmine himself, and still printed with the Roman Vulgate. No mention is made of 'somebody else,' and the errors are said to have occurred 'praeli vitio.' The preface tells that when the work had been printed, and when Pope Sixtus was going to publish it (implying that he had not published it*), perceiving that several errors of the press had crept in, he determined to have the whole work placed anew on the anvil. But that Sixtus really had any such intention is a statement for which there is no shadow of proof, and no probability. The edition of Clement, also published as authentic, differed from that of Sixtus in more than two thousand places. A list of these is given in the work of Dr. James, a former learned librarian of the Bodleian, called *Bellum Papale*, or *Concordia Discors*. And it became evident that the work of editing the Bible required patience, learning, critical sagacity, and that this was a work to which 'infallibility' was unequal.

We owe it to the wilfulness of Sixtus that this was so soon found out. If he had been content to follow the opinions of the experts whom he had consulted, no doubt his edition would have appeared without opposition, and the Constitution prefixed, in which Sixtus had plainly claimed for his text the guarantee of infallibility, would have been a great obstacle to its emendation by later criticism.

I will mention one other department from which the Popes have had to retire with their prerogative of infallibility sorely discredited. In ordinary cases, as I have so often said, their policy has been to avoid committing themselves; but in some rare instances the case appeared to be so plain as to make caution unnecessary. One of these cases was when the notion was first seriously entertained by men of science, that the sun, not the earth, is the centre of our system, and that the earth, instead of being stationary, is in rapid motion. Such an idea was so opposed to reason and common sense, so contrary to the opinion entertained for many ages by philosophers, so at variance with the plain words of Scripture, that the Church authorities felt they were

* We have a copy in our Library.

quite safe in putting down teaching at once heretical and absurd. Now let me do every justice to the Roman authorities who took this false step. There is no error committed by the Popes or their councillors which we ought to be more ready to pardon and to sympathize with; for their mistake was prompted by reverence for Scripture, and quite similar mistakes have been since committed by highly respected men in our own communion. But still if we make mistakes we confess them and profit by them. We do not pretend to be possessors of any infallibly accurate interpretation of Scripture, and we therefore cannot omit to use one of the few opportunities open to us of testing the pretensions of those who do make this claim.

The present case is one of the most unpleasant that Roman Catholic controversialists have got to meet, for they cannot but be conscious that the best apologies they can offer are extremely unsatisfactory. They could save themselves all trouble if they would frankly say, 'Our Church made a great mistake two hundred and fifty years ago. She then imagined statements to be heretical which we now know were not only not heretical, but were perfectly true. She is a great deal wiser now.' Perhaps the theory of development may be improved into a form which will allow that confession to be made. But if that time comes, we need dispute no more about the Church's infallibility: the whole claim will then have been given up. Meanwhile we have to consider whether any of the attempts have been successful that have been made to free the Roman Church from the responsibility of mistakes which her rulers confessedly made at the beginning of the seventeenth century.

It is well known to you all to what severe treatment Galileo was subjected for holding the doctrine about the motion of the earth which is now held by every educated man; or rather for being suspected of holding it. For Galileo did not categorically state this opinion as his own, but only introduced it in the form of a dialogue, so as not to make himself responsible for the opinions of either speaker. In order that you should understand the necessity for this

caution, I had better briefly tell you those facts in his life with which we are concerned;* and before discussing the dealings of the Inquisition with him in 1633, I must say something about the previous action of the Inquisition in 1616.

Galileo had already a high place in the scientific world, when, in 1609, he was the first to turn a telescope on the heavens. All Europe soon rang with the news of the surprising announcements he was able to make, which entitled him to rank as the greatest philosopher of his age. The new facts thus brought to light speedily removed all doubts in Galileo's own mind as to the truth of the theory which Copernicus had put forward concerning the motion of the earth. One of the first of his discoveries, that of the satellites of Jupiter, put the controversy concerning the true system of the universe in a new position. The old theory was that stars and planets all went round the earth. Here was a clear case of exception; for these four newly-discovered stars unquestionably made their revolutions, not round the earth, but round Jupiter. The sight of this planet, attended by its four satellites, was alone sufficient to shake the confidence of astronomers in their belief that the earth was the most important body in the universe; while the spectacle of these bodies performing in perfect order their revolutions round one celestial body could not but suggest an analogy revealing the true relation of the planets to the sun. Again, when the theory was first put forward that the planets are bodies which only shine by the reflected light of the sun, it was objected that, if this were the case, Venus ought to present the same phases as the moon, changing from full face to a crescent, according as we saw more or less of the side illuminated by the sun. Copernicus made an unsuccessful attempt to explain this difficulty; but when Venus was looked at through a telescope, she was seen actually going through those changes, the seeming absence of which when sought

* I recommend those who have leisure to read *The Private Life of Galileo*, published by Macmillan in 1870, and to make the acquaintance of that most charming person, Galileo's daughter, Sister Maria Celeste.

for by the naked eye had been considered a fatal objection to the Copernican theory.

Galileo was a firm believer in the truth of Scripture, and as soon as he came to believe that the Copernican theory was true, he could not help also believing that it was not contrary to the Bible. Accordingly, in 1613, he wrote a letter, defending this view, to Castelli, who was Mathematical Professor at Pisa. He said that the Bible was beyond doubt infallible; but that though the Scripture could not err, its interpreters might. Clearly we are not to interpret every word of Scripture literally; for if so we should have to attribute to God hands, feet, and ears, and human and bodily emotions, such as anger, repentance, and hatred. There were obvious reasons why, in speaking incidentally of the sun, or of the earth, or other created bodies, the Scriptures should conform to popular language. For had a different course been pursued, the vulgar would have been only perplexed, and have been rendered more difficult of persuasion in the articles concerning their salvation:—

'I believe that the intention of Holy Writ was to persuade men of the truths necessary to salvation; such as neither science nor other means could render credible, but only the voice of the Holy Spirit. But I do not think it necessary to believe that the same God who gave us our senses, our speech, our intellect, would have us put aside the use of these to teach us instead such things as with their help we could find out for ourselves, particularly in the case of those sciences of which there is not the smallest mention in Scripture; and above all in astronomy, of which so little notice is taken, that none of the planets, except the sun and moon, and once or twice only Venus, under the name of Lucifer, is so much as named there. Surely, if the intention of the sacred writers had been to teach the people astronomy, they would not have passed the subject over so completely.'

This letter was the occasion of the first collision between Galileo and ecclesiastical authorities; for though it was a private letter, a copy fell, either through indiscretion or treachery, into the hands of Dominicans at Florence, one of

whom denounced it to the Holy Office at Rome. And naturally it gave much offence that a layman should presume to teach theologians how to interpret Scripture.

It is a commonplace with Roman Catholic apologists to say that Galileo had only himself to blame for the trouble he got into, through, as one of them expresses it, poking his nose into what was other people's business. 'Why did he not stick to his mathematics, and leave the interpretation of Scripture to theologians? He seemed determined to ruin himself. Had he not got a message from Cardinal Barberini (afterwards Pope Urban VIII.), telling him that he ought not to travel out of the limits of physics and mathematics, but confine himself to such reasonings as Ptolemy and Copernicus had used? Declaring the views of Scripture theologians maintain to be their own particular province.' Cardinal Bellarmine also had said that if Galileo spoke with circumspection, and only as a mathematician, he would be put to no further trouble.

If theologians at that time complained that astronomers had intruded into their province of interpreting Scripture, astronomers have, with equal reason, complained that it was theologians who intruded into their province of interpreting the appearances of the heavens. The fact was that the two provinces then overlapped, and there was ground on which one party had as much right to be as the other. Either the earth moves, or it does not. If it moves, theologians were wrong in inferring from Scripture that God had revealed that it is at rest; if it does not move, the Copernicans had wrongly interpreted the indications of their science. You know how the matter has ended. Roman Catholics and Protestants are now agreed that the theologians of two hundred years ago were wrong in the system of astronomy which they imagined they had derived from the Bible; and Roman Catholics and Protestants agree in adopting the principles of Scripture interpretation which Galileo taught the theologians of his day.

But it is necessary to explain how a collision had been avoided before, and what was meant by saying that Galileo ought to speak 'only as a mathematician.' The reason why

the speculations of Copernicus about the earth's motion had been tolerated by ecclesiastics, while the writings of Galileo on the same subject were rigidly condemned, was that Galileo's predecessors, in order to avoid shocking existing prejudices, had taken some pains to represent the notion of the earth's motion, not as a true account of what actually takes place, but as a mathematical fiction imagined for the more convenient calculation of the places of the heavenly bodies. There is, you know, great virtue in an *if*. Theologians insisted on saying, without contradiction, that the earth does not move; but they had no objection to allow mathematicians to amuse themselves with the problem, *If* the earth and the planets went round the sun, what appearances would the planets, on that hypothesis, present? Galileo found that the answer to that question was, Exactly the appearances which we observe now; while, on the contrary, the observed appearances were not explained by the older theory. He could not then resist the conviction that the Copernican doctrine of the earth's motion was no mere mathematical fiction, but the absolute truth.

Holding this belief, how could he acquiesce in the conclusion that the Bible teaches the direct contrary? From the language used by Roman Catholic writers one would imagine that Galileo had attempted to establish the earth's motion by an array of Bible texts, and to prove that the opposite doctrine was an anti-Scriptural heresy. Far from this, all he contended for was toleration for his own belief. He only endeavoured to make out that there was nothing in the Bible that forbade him to believe that the earth moved. And unless he imagined that the same thing could be scientifically true and theologically false, how was it possible for him, who believed that nothing false is taught as an article of faith in the Scriptures, when he had come to believe that the doctrine that the earth does not move is false, to avoid asserting that the doctrine that the earth is at rest is not taught in the Bible as an article of faith? Nothing is so puzzling as a real love of truth to people who are not possessed of it themselves. The good old orthodox theologians of Galileo's day could

not imagine what motive the philosopher could have for persisting in saying that it was the earth which went round the sun, and not the sun which went round the earth. That he should say so, merely because he was convinced it was true, was quite beyond their comprehension. It must be from love of opposition, from a wish to insult them, from sheer obstinacy, from self-conceit, or some other unworthy motive. And similar blindness to the claims of truth, and to the obligations which it imposes, is exhibited by the Roman Catholic apologists of the present day, who cry out against Galileo's imprudence and hot-headed meddling with theological questions. Surely more true zeal for the honour of Scripture was shown by Galileo, when he reasoned that the doctrine which he knew to be false could not be the doctrine of Scripture, than was shown by those ecclesiastics who were angry with him because he would not allow them, without remonstrance, to stake the credit of Scripture on the maintenance of an utterly false philosophy; and who, if allowed to have their own way, would have done as much injury to the reputation of the Bible as they have done to the doctrine of the infallibility of the Church of Rome.

I return now to the history. When Galileo's letter was brought under the notice of the Roman Inquisition there was great unwillingness to deal harshly with the philosopher, who was then at the height of his reputation, and who had many and powerful friends at Rome itself, where he had recently exhibited his telescope, amid general admiration. Now, in every criminal trial there are two questions—a question of law, and a question of fact. In the case of a trial for heresy, the question of fact is, What are the words which the accused person has spoken or written? the question of law is whether these words contain heresy. The practice of the Inquisition is only to deal directly with the question of fact; while the question of law is referred to a special Board of skilled theologians, under the title of *Qualifiers*, their business being to state the *quality* of the propositions submitted to them, and in particular whether or not they are heretical. Now, the Inquisition was able to pronounce Galileo's

acquittal on the question of fact. The document submitted to them only purported to be a copy of a letter written by Galileo: where was the original? It could not be produced. No doubt, if the Inquisitors had been malevolently disposed, they might have resorted to such further inquiry as would either have brought the letter home to Galileo, or at least would have proved that it truly expressed his sentiments. But they were content, in the absence of positive evidence, to pronounce a verdict of Not Guilty; only they took care that the verdict should be, Not Guilty, but don't do it again.

They obtained a report from their 'qualifiers,' which ran in the following terms:—

(1). The proposition that the sun is the centre of the world, and immoveable from its place, is absurd, philosophically false, and formally heretical, because it is expressly contrary to Holy Scripture.

(2). The proposition that the earth is not the centre of the world, nor immoveable, but that it moves, and also with a diurnal motion, is also absurd, philosophically false, and theologically considered at least erroneous in faith.

Galileo was not required to make abjuration, or to do penance, because he had not been convicted of heresy; but, by order of the Holy Office, Cardinal Bellarmine summoned him before him, and admonished him in the name of the Pope and of the Holy Office, under pain of imprisonment, that he must give up the opinion that the sun is the centre of the world and immoveable, and that the earth moves, and must not hold, teach it, or defend it either by word or writing; otherwise proceedings would be taken against him in the Holy Office. Galileo submitted, and promised to obey.

But it was not enough that Galileo should be personally warned against holding the heliocentric theory of the universe: the whole world must be similarly instructed;* and this was done by another tribunal. On March 5th, 1616, the Congregation of the Index, a Committee of Cardinals ap-

* The publication by papal authority of the decision of the 'qualifiers' in Galileo's case will be mentioned presently.

pointed by the Pope for the prevention of the circulation of dangerous books, published the following decree :—

'Since it has come to the knowledge of this Holy Congregation that the false Pythagorean doctrine, altogether opposed to the Divine Scripture, of the mobility of the earth, and the immobility of the sun, which Nicolas Copernicus, in his work *De revolutionibus orbium caelestium*, and Didacus a Stunica in his Commentary on Job, teach, is being promulgated and accepted by many, as may be seen from a printed letter of a certain Carmelite Father (Foscarini), entitled, &c., wherein the said Father has attempted to show that the said doctrine is consonant to truth, and not opposed to Holy Scripture; therefore, lest this opinion insinuate itself further to the damage of Catholic truth, this Congregation has decreed that the said books, Copernicus *De revolutionibus*, and Stunica on Job, be suspended till they are corrected, but that the book of Foscarini the Carmelite be altogether prohibited and condemned, and all other books that teach the same thing.'

You might understand, from what I have said before, the kind of correction with which the book of Copernicus might be tolerated. But we have direct evidence in a later 'monitum' published by the Congregation four years later. It states that it had been deemed necessary to prohibit the book of Copernicus because it ventures to state, not by way of hypothesis, but as actual truth, propositions concerning the motion of the earth, repugnant to the Holy Scripture and to its true and Catholic interpretation, a thing by no means to be tolerated in any Christian man. But, since the works of Copernicus are in other respects useful, permission for their circulation is given, provided every passage where the motion of the earth is asserted as a fact, is altered so as to indicate that this is merely an assumption made by the author. And then a detailed list is given of the necessary emendations.*

* I may as well here add a caution against a common confusion between Prohibitory and Expurgatory Indexes. The object of the Prohibitory Index is obvious enough, namely, to warn the faithful against mischievous books; and of course to

While speaking of the Congregation of the Index, I may mention that it continued its war on the Copernican theory for about two centuries. The Index of 1704 contains the comprehensive prohibition, 'all books that teach the mobility of the earth, or the immobility of the sun.' A striking proof that this prohibition did not remain a dead letter is afforded by the preface to what is commonly called the Jesuits'* edition of Newton's *Principia*. Whether apprehensive that their own book might be placed on the Index, and its sale forbidden, or that they might suffer in some other way for the publication of a book so plainly teaching the mobility of the earth, they tender in the preface the following apology:—

'Newton, in this third book, supposes the motion of the earth. We could not explain the author's propositions otherwise than by making the same supposition. We are therefore forced to sustain a character which is not our own; but we profess to pay the obsequious reverence which is due to the decrees pronounced by the sovereign Pontiffs against the motion of the earth.'

I cannot help observing, in passing, how the despotic system of the Church of Rome inevitably leads to scepticism.

such warnings full publicity was given. But cases might arise, such as that which has now come before us, where a book in the main innocent, or even useful, was in places disfigured by some erroneous teaching. The possessors of such books were mercifully permitted to use them, provided they first gave them up to the Inquisitors in order to have them returned to them with the faulty matter expunged. The Expurgatory Indexes contained directions what passages were to be thus blotted out. But it is plain that these directions must be reserved for the private use of those who were to make the corrections; for if an Expurgatory Index got into general circulation, it would evidently be infinitely more mischievous than the books themselves, all whose bad passages it would present in a concentrated form. The attempts, however, to keep such Indexes secret were not quite successful. Some fell into the hands of Protestants, who naturally triumphed on discovering that in some instances genuine sayings of Fathers were directed to be expunged because they had too Protestant a sound.

A copy of De la Bigne's *Library of the Fathers*, contained in our Library, has undergone this expurgation, the certificate of which is to be found in the beginning of the second volume. The faulty passages in some cases have paper pasted over them, in others are blotted out with a pen. The shelf-mark is GG. e. 5–8. The expurgations will be found to be those directed in Quiroga's Index, the shelf-mark of which is N. f. 37.

* The editors were really members of a different religious order.

No one can trust his neighbour, or be sure that he really believes the doctrine which he professes. No one can believe that the authors of the very intelligent commentary on Newton's *Principia*, to which this advertisement was prefixed, did in their hearts pay more reverence to the decrees of the supreme Pontiff against the motion of the earth than the earth pays to them herself; and when we have such a striking proof how Roman Catholic divines will, in order to preserve external unity, deny their most certain convictions, what value can we attribute to the submission made to the decrees of the Vatican Council by men who had given good proof of their falsity?—nay, what certainty have we that any Roman Catholic really believes what he says about Purgatory or Transubstantiation, not to speak of a disputed doctrine like the Immaculate Conception, or the sanction that bishops and priests have given to such a tale as that of La Salette?

These prohibitions continued in force for a century longer. At the beginning of the present century the astronomer Lalande, made great exertions at Rome to have the names of Galileo, Copernicus, and Foscarini, removed from the Index; but in vain. Accordingly, the Index for 1828 contains the names of these three culprits; but the prohibition against all books teaching the mobility of the earth was quietly dropped out of the later editions of the Index. It was only on the accession of Gregory XVI., the predecessor of Pius IX., that the important step was taken, and the attempt to insist on believing on the immobility of the earth was finally abandoned. For the first time for some two hundred years an Index of prohibited books was published, in which no confession of previous error was made, but the names of Galileo, Copernicus, and Foscarini, were silently withdrawn. Even then there were some at the Papal Court who regarded this as a weakminded concession to modern prejudice. I remember well how common it was in Roman Catholic periodicals to see the Newtonian theory of gravitation spoken of as if it were a temporary scientific fashion, likely as time went on to blow over. I remember that when Cardinal

Cullen came over here it was asserted that he had committed himself as an Anti-Copernican. Mr. St. George Mivart quotes a priest now living, a head of a college, as saying, 'How glorious it would be if it should turn out after all that the sun does move round the earth, and that the Church had been all the time in the right.' But if the race of Anti-Copernicans is not yet extinct,* their better instructed Roman Catholic friends are now ashamed of them, and at the present day those of them who discuss the case of Galileo do not venture to deny the scientific truth of that philosopher's doctrines, but offer other apologies, the value of which I will consider presently.

I return now to the history of Galileo. He went back to Florence much disheartened at the condemnation of the Copernican doctrines, but professing outward submission to the Papal decisions. It would be unreasonable to suppose that he accepted them in his heart; and we cannot help regarding as ironical some of the language he used. Thus, for instance, in a tract which he published on the motions of comets, he says: 'Since the motion attributed to the earth, which I, as a pious and Catholic person, consider most false and not to exist, accommodates itself so well as to explain so many and such different phenomena, I shall not feel sure but that, false as it is, it may not just as deludingly correspond with the phenomena of comets.' He preserved the same verbal conformity to the commands of his superiors in the

* The occasion of my article in the *Contemporary Review* (referred to, page 216) was, that I had happened to come across a periodical published in Paris by the Abbé Cloquet, which claimed for itself an immense circulation, and the main object of which, number after number, was to denounce the Copernican theory, and to accuse of heresy those of his ecclesiastical superiors who countenanced a doctrine condemned by the highest authority in his Church. The circulation of such a periodical in our own day appeared to me so very curious a phenomenon, that I could not help speaking of it, nor did I see any need for refusing to put the story into print. But I was careful to state that the higher ecclesiastical authorities in France, far from sympathizing with Cloquet's teaching, were making every effort to put it down. In fact Cloquet was putting dangerous weapons into the hands of those enemies, not only of the Roman Church, but of Christianity, who desired to exclude that Church from all share in the education of the people. The spectacle of priests disobedient to their bishops is not unknown in our own Church; and it was with some surprise, but with real sym-

work which he published in 1632, which was the cause of his subsequent troubles. He gave it the form of a dialogue, which enabled him to state the arguments on both sides without committing himself to an adoption of either; and he said that he proposed to discuss the Copernican system as a mere mathematical hypothesis, and to show, not its absolute truth, but its superiority to some bad arguments by which it had been assailed. The disguise, however, was found to be a little too thin. Johnson said that when he reported the speeches in Parliament he took care that the Whig dogs should not get the best of it; and certainly the Anti-Copernicans did not get the best of it in Galileo's report. Their advocate was felt by the reader to be no very wise person: 'un sciocco' he was called by the papal reporters on the dialogue. And what made the matter worse, it is said that the Pope (Urban VIII.) recognized in the arguments put into the mouth of this silly speaker some which he had formerly used himself in discussion with Galileo. So the sale of the dialogue was forbidden, and a summons was served on Galileo ordering him to appear before the Inquisition at Rome. He made every effort to escape obedience, pleading inability to undertake the journey (a more formidable business then than now), on account of his age (he was seventy), and the bad state of his health, and asking for at least a reprieve. His excuses were not accepted by the Pope, who said he might come in a litter if he pleased; but come he must. The Florentine Inquisitor visited Galileo, and found

pathy, that I saw that our neighbours' discipline was not as perfect as I had imagined it to be.

Father Ryder accuses me of bad taste in doing something like 'making play with a tipsy priest.' I have never heard that there was any impeachment on Cloquet's moral character, and I rather think that Father Ryder does not mean to bring any. I take the phrase 'tipsy priest,' to be merely a specimen of controversial logic. Insubordination is wrong, tipsiness is wrong, therefore when you mean an insubordinate person you may speak of a tipsy one, if thereby greater odium can be cast on an opponent. Insubordination is most excusable when a private disobeys his captain's orders, because he knows that these orders are in direct opposition to the orders given the captain by the colonel. Cloquet clearly proved that he had that excuse; for no one who, like him, is quite free from the modern prejudice that in matters of science philosophers know better than popes, can doubt that the heliocentric theory is a condemned heresy.

him confined to his bed, and professing himself unable to take the journey in his then state of health. A certificate was forwarded, signed by three of the most eminent medical men in Florence, to the effect that Galileo was suffering from hernia, and could not be moved without danger to his life. The answer from the Inquisition was, that if he did not come the Pope and the Holy Office would send down a commissary and a physician of their own, whose expenses would have to be defrayed at Galileo's cost. If they should find him able to travel they were at once to deprive him of his liberty, and send him up in irons; if they should find that the move would involve danger of life, they were to send him up bound and in irons as soon as the danger was over.

Under this persuasion Galileo was induced to face the journey to Rome, where he met with as much indulgence as the rules of the Inquisition permitted. Until personal examination was necessary, he was allowed to lodge in the Florentine ambassador's palace, but on condition that he was to observe strict seclusion, and receive the visits of none but intimate friends. When personal examination was necessary, the three or four weeks he spent within the walls of the Inquisition were not passed in any close or unwholesome dungeon, but in the apartments of the Fiscal of the Inquisition, where the attendance of his own servant was allowed him. Even this mitigated confinement had an unfavourable effect on his health.

The result of the trial is well known. Galileo pleaded in vain that he had not infringed the injunction laid on him by defending an opinion already condemned, and the condemnation of which had been made known to him. When he urged that he had left the question undetermined, and had only discussed the probability of the Copernican hypothesis, he was told that therein he had committed a grave error, for that an opinion can in no manner be probable which has already been declared and defined to be contrary to the Divine Scriptures. The Inquisitors were certainly justified by the evidence when they arrived at the conclusion that there were very strong grounds for suspecting that Galileo held

the heretical doctrine of the earth's motion, and also the heresy that an opinion can be held and defended as probable after it has been declared and defined to be contrary to Holy Scripture. Accordingly, in order to remove from the minds of all Catholic Christians this vehement suspicion legitimately conceived against him, he was ordered to swear that with a sincere heart and faith unfeigned he abjured, cursed, and detested the above-named and all other heresies; and to swear further that for the future he would not assert, either by word of mouth or in writing, anything to bring upon him similar suspicion. And in order that his grave and pernicious error might not remain altogether unpunished, that he might be more cautious for the future, and be an example to others to abstain from offences of this sort, his book was prohibited by public edict; he was condemned to the prisons of the Holy Office during the Pope's pleasure, and was commanded for three weeks to recite the seven Penitential Psalms once a week.

Galileo made his abjuration accordingly, but for the remaining eight or nine years of his life never completely recovered his liberty; for though his confinement was as little disagreeable as such a thing could be, he was never permitted to have quite free intercourse with his friends. He was for five months a guest with the Archbishop of Siena; afterwards, when his residence in a city was thought to lead to a mischievous propagation of his opinions, he was allowed to reside in his own country-house, a little distance from Florence, but not to occupy his house in that city. He must remain in solitude, and neither invite nor receive guests for conference. When he asked special permission to go to Florence for medical advice, he was told that if he was troublesome the liberty he already enjoyed would be taken from him. At length he was once allowed to go. He was not permitted either to reprint his old books, or to print new ones. When he died, his power to make a will was disputed, and the question was raised whether his body might be placed in consecrated ground. That was decided in his favour; but when the Grand Duke proposed to raise a marble

monument to him, he received a message from the Pope that such an intention, if carried out, would be most pernicious, and that he must remember that Galileo during his life had caused scandal to all Christendom by his false and damnable doctrine.

In considering Romanist apologies for the treatment of Galileo, I have chiefly in view one of the ablest, published in the *Clifton Tracts* in 1854, and founded on two articles, one in the *Dublin Review* for July, 1838, the other in the *Rambler* for January, 1852.

The apologist's first topic is the leniency shown to Galileo by the Inquisition, and therefore I have been careful to make due mention of the instances of their indulgence. If you should ever be in the wrong, and really deserve a scolding, the most approved method of getting out of the scrape is to wait until those who have good reason to be angry with you make use in their wrath of some unadvisedly strong expressions. Then it is your turn: you may raise an outcry at the undeserved imputations that have been cast on you; exaggerate as much as possible the reproaches that have been heaped upon you; and if you play your part well the original offence may be forgotten, and you may pass yourself off successfully as the aggrieved party. This is the common method of Roman Catholic apologists for their Church on points on which her doctrines or her actions have excited prejudice against her. Their plan is to commence the reply with a highly coloured account of the hard things Protestants have said against them; and then by way of contrast to produce the maligned doctrine with everything offensive kept carefully in the background, so as to enlist the reader's sympathies on the side of injured innocence, and make him wonder that anything so harmless should be assailed by such malignant misrepresentations.

Thus the article to which I now refer begins by informing us that Protestants (we are not told who) had asserted that Galileo had been kept for five years in the dungeons of the Inquisition, that he had been put on the rack, that his eyes had been put out by the cruel Inquisitors; whereas, his pen-

ance had been nothing more than the recital of the Penitential Psalms once a week, and his place of imprisonment only the Dominican Convent, where the officers of the Inquisition themselves resided, or the 'delightful palace' of the Tuscan ambassador at Rome, and finally Galileo's country-place near Florence. The account I have given you of the restrictions under which he suffered, and which destroyed the happiness of the last years of his life, will have shown you that this author's rose-coloured picture is as far from the truth as the Protestant exaggerations which he quotes, and that the 'tender mercies' of the Inquisition are sufficiently cruel.

Let us suppose, for example, that the Archbishop of Canterbury had taken it into his head that the great telescope made by our former Chancellor, the late Lord Rosse, was dangerous to the Christian faith; suppose that our astronomer was compelled to go over to London to answer for his heresies; that no plea of age or ill-health was allowed to excuse him from the journey; that he was there obliged to observe the strictest seclusion; and that after some months' delay there, when eventually allowed to return home, he was ordered to consider himself a prisoner in his own house at Parsonstown; that there he was forbidden to publish scientific books, or to hold conference with men of science, and that he asked in vain for permission to come up to Dublin for medical advice. Let us suppose all this, and what should we say of the clergyman who should set up for such treatment such a defence as this: To be sure, the offence of the heretical telescope was one which could not be overlooked; but then consider how mildly he was treated. He was not put into a dungeon with common felons, but allowed to occupy in the prison the Governor's own private apartments; he was not kept in jail for five years; we did not put him on the rack; and, above all, we did not put out his eyes!

Although I accept the statement that Galileo was not put on the rack, it is right to mention that the point has been contested. It appears from the sentence on Galileo that his answers not being thought satisfactory, it was deemed necessary to proceed to a 'rigoroso esame,' and I think it is

sufficiently proved that in the language of the Inquisition this phrase meant an examination in which torture might be used. Torture was an established method with the Inquisition. It was used in secular courts at the time, and the Inquisition considered that they were less able than other courts to dispense with it, because the offence of heresy being a secret one, residing in the mind alone, and therefore one which an accused person could easily deny, special means were necessary to elicit his real opinions. In the case, however, of children and very old persons a minor form of torture was commonly used, that of threatening torture; and accused persons in the hands of the Inquisition had good reason to take such threats very seriously. There is clear evidence that torture was threatened in Galileo's case; but as far as I can judge, not good reason to think that it was actually used. But the point seems to me of quite small importance. The opinion expressed in Galileo's abjuration, that the doctrine of the earth's motion was false, was certainly not that with which he had entered the walls of the Inquisition; and the arguments which induced him to express a change of mind were certainly not addressed to his intellect. Put the question of torture aside; and still Galileo was informed that the opinion which he really held had been pronounced heretical, and that if he again taught it, he would be treated as a relapsed heretic. Translating this into English, it meant that if he were dealt mildly with, the result would be lifelong imprisonment; if the law were fully carried out, he must be burned alive, as Giordano Bruno and others had been. The ecclesiastical authorities at the time, no doubt, thought they had gained a triumph when they obtained Galileo's abjuration; but that abjuration remains their lasting disgrace, because it could only have been obtained by means which it was a disgrace to use. If I had time to discuss with you the question of the propriety of torturing and burning heretics, I should add another to the list of papal errors; and an error is not less an error though he who falls into it may be able to produce companions in his mistake, and to cite respectable authorities who led him into it.

The question, however, whether or not the Inquisitors dealt mildly with Galileo is irrelevant to the subject of this lecture. What we are concerned with is, Did the Inquisitors, acting under the Pope's authority, and with his personal concurrence, oblige Galileo to profess belief in what we now know to be false; and if so, how can Infallibility be claimed for an authority guilty of such a prodigious blunder? Our apologist contends that it was right to require a retractation, because the scientific arguments by which Galileo supported his opinion were not as good as have been since obtained on the same side; and that his doctrine being likely to prejudice in men's minds their respect for the Bible, he might properly be called on to condemn and renounce it, and declare it to be 'false in the sense of unproved.'

False in the sense of unproved! The apologist must have counted on readers ignorant of the English language. He might nearly as well have said, 'False in the sense of true.' Who can be persuaded that to declare a doctrine to be absurd, false, and expressly contrary to Holy Scripture, means no more than that the arguments which support it fall short of demonstration? Besides, it would be for astronomers, not for theologians, to judge whether the scientific arguments by which Galileo supported his views amounted to demonstration or not. If theologians undertook to find fault with arguments which men of science have since found to be abundantly conclusive, they were justly punished for 'poking their nose into other people's business.' But they made no such mistake. The tribunal of the Inquisition never dreamed of setting itself up as an authority for pronouncing on the progress of science. In knowledge of the science of astronomy they must have been perfectly well aware that Galileo was infinitely their superior. What they thought they did know better than he was how to interpret Scripture. It was as theologians they interfered; and interfered, as we now know, wrongly. And indeed how could science ever have come to its present state if they could have had their way? Every good Catholic was forbidden even to read a book which taught the mobility of the earth. You might find something to say in defence of an

attempt to silence an ignorant person who, without any real knowledge, had scoffingly asserted the mobility of the earth, only in order to bring the authority of Scripture into contempt; but nothing to justify an attempt to suppress the respectful investigations of the most eminent man of science of the day.

I have just said that the Inquisitors did not claim to know more about scientific arguments than Galileo, but that they did claim to know better than he how to interpret Scripture. Yet it turns out now that, with regard to the interpretation of Scripture, Galileo was right, and they were wrong. The condemnation of Galileo has been a good deal discussed with reference to the question of the Pope's personal infallibility. You will see now that it cuts much deeper, and affects the question of the Church's infallibility, speaking by no matter what organ. The Council of Trent declared that it is the province of Holy Mother Church to judge of the true sense and interpretation of the Holy Scriptures. Now there are many texts of Scripture which we hold that the Roman Church interprets wrongly; but we have no means of forcing her to own that we are right and she wrong. We have the means in the case of such texts as 'He hath made the round world so fast that it cannot be moved.' From such texts it was inferred in the sixteenth century that the physical fact of the immobility of the earth was a revealed truth. Everyone entitled to speak on behalf of 'Holy Mother Church' asserted it. If general consent, universal long tradition, absence of opposing view, can prove any interpretation of Scripture to be lawfully imposed by the head of the Church, this certainly was so. And yet it has now to be confessed that that interpretation was wrong. It must be owned, therefore, that whatever respect the Church may claim when she interprets Scripture, she is not infallible, and that the Church of a more learned age may wisely review and correct the decisions of its predecessors.

Yes; but it will be said that the Church's infallibility when she interprets Scripture is limited to questions of faith and morals, and that the question of the earth's mobility

is not one of faith. But this is to accuse the heads of the Church in Galileo's time of a far graver mistake. It is surely a less error to decide a question that belongs to your province wrongly, than not to know what belongs to your province, and what does not. If modern apologists are right, the Church in Galileo's time not only was wrong in pronouncing it to be heresy to hold that the earth went round the sun; but was utterly wrong in imagining that either of the opinions—the sun goes round the earth, or the earth goes round the sun—possibly could be heresy, the whole subject being outside the domain with which faith has to deal. On the contrary, the Church in Galileo's time held that it was of faith to maintain the absolute correctness of everything asserted in express words of Scripture, and that the doctrine of the earth's fixity was so asserted. Some parts of Scripture, dealing directly with faith or morals, are eminently dogmatical, and are spoken of as *scripta propter se;* other parts are only dogmatic *per accidens;* but the Church has taught that all are alike inspired. But, in any case, no loyal member of the Roman Church is justified in raising the question whether, in Galileo's case, she went out of her province. It is for the Church to ascertain the limits of her own powers. How could she condemn any heresy, if it was open to the accused person to deny the Church's jurisdiction altogether with regard to the question in dispute? The truth is, that modern Roman apologists have fallen into a condemned heresy themselves. For I have already told you that one of the heresies condemned in the sentence on Galileo was 'that an opinion can be held and defended as probable after it has been declared and defined to be contrary to Holy Scripture'; and the doctrine of the earth's mobility was so declared and defined.

It remains to discuss how the condemnation of Galileo directly affects the question of Papal Infallibility. It is certain that the decrees of the Inquisition and of the Congregation of the Index expressed the sentiments of the individual Pope who was the prime mover in the whole business, and who even personally presided at some of the meetings. But

on various pleas it has been contended that the tribunal which published the decrees was not the Pope *speaking infallibly*. That he did not speak infallibly then we need not dispute; but if he did not speak infallibly then, it will be impossible to know that he ever speaks infallibly.*

But before discussing any of these pleas, let me say that if they were successful they would only transfer the present instance from the subject of the present lecture, 'The Blunders of the Infallible Guide,' to that of the preceding lecture, 'The Silences of the Infallible Guide.' We have seen that the Popes appear to think the gift of infallibility quite too precious for everyday use, and that when a disputed question arises it is the hardest matter to obtain a decision on it from the infallible authority. But there are some occasions which would extort speech from the most taciturn of human beings; and I imagine that the most silent of men might be induced to speak, if he saw a fellow-creature about to be severely punished, perhaps burned alive, in his name, and by his alleged authority, upon a charge of heresy which he had the means of infallibly knowing was no heresy at all. It cannot plausibly be maintained that a Church possessing an infallible guide to secure her from heresy should appoint a special tribunal for the expulsion of heresy, and that that tribunal, acting under the very eyes of the Church's head, should be left in uncertainty what is or is not heresy. I have used the illustration of an alchemist allowing his own children to starve. This would be exactly verified if we were to believe

* The Rev. W. W. Roberts (see *Guardian*, Aug. 10, 17, 1887, and his work, *Pontifical Decrees against the Motion of the Earth*) has collected some instances from the pontificate of the late Pope, Pius IX., in which decisions to which the Pope was less directly committed than in the case of Galileo, were treated as binding on all Catholics. For example, on February 20, 1857, the Congregation of the Index condemned and prohibited certain works of a German theologian, Günther. The decree contained no doctrinal statement, and gave no reason for the prohibition. But some of Günther's followers being still unwilling to own the unsoundness of their master's tenets, the Pope wrote an apostolic letter to the Archbishop of Cologne, known as the Brief 'Eximiam tuam,' in which he says: 'That decree sanctioned by our authority, and published by our command, plainly ought to have sufficed that the whole question be judged entirely settled, and that all who boast of the Catholic name should clearly and distinctly understand that complete obedience was to be paid to it, and that the doctrine

that the Pope is infallible when he tells other people what is heresy, but that he is either unable or unwilling to ascertain this when it is absolutely necessary for the guidance of his own conduct. It is nothing less than a gross libel on Pope Paul V., who was Pope in 1616, to assert that he did not bring all the resources of his infallibility into play in the case of Galileo; and whatever errors we may accuse him of, we can honestly acquit him of this charge.

I need not then tarry over the plea that either Paul in 1616, or Urban in 1633, erred, but only as a private doctor, not as a Pope speaking *ex cathedra*. With regard to the question when the Pope speaks *ex cathedra*, the only rational distinction is between his official and non-official utterances. We do not hold the Papacy responsible for everything Urban may have said in conversation to Galileo; but in all the transactions which I am discussing it is clear that neither Urban nor Paul acted as a private doctor, but as Pope. It is said, however, that the Pope is both teacher and governor of the Church, and that though infallible as teacher, he may err in the steps he takes as governor, for the preservation of the Church's discipline. But when the punishment of heresy is concerned, it is impossible to separate his disciplinary from his teaching power. It may be assumed as certain that the Pope would not punish a man for heresy without having first ascertained that the doctrine which he held was heresy; and the Pope could not teach the world more distinctly that a certain doctrine

contained in Günther's works could not be accounted sound.' The second Papal utterance quoted by Mr. Roberts was made on the occasion of a meeting of German divines and men of science in the autumn of 1863. The Pope expressed himself dissatisfied with their acknowledgment that 'Catholics are to submit in all their scientific investigations to the dogmatic utterances of the infallible authority of the Church.' Not merely so, he taught them, 'but also to the decisions pertaining to doctrine that are put forth by Pontifical congregations, as also to those heads of doctrine which are retained by the common consent of Catholics as theological truths and conclusions so certain, that opinions adverse to the same, though they cannot be called heretical, yet deserve some other theological censure.' A third instance relates to a condemnation of the teaching of a Louvain Professor, Ubaghs, which, though never officially made known to the world, was treated by Papal authority in 1866 and in 1870 as absolutely decisive with respect to the doctrines in question.

is heretical than by setting the example of punishing a man for holding it.

Neither need I linger over a plea in which some Romanists find much comfort, that the condemnation of Galileo does not contain what is called the customary clause of Papal confirmation at the end. We may be sure that Paul V. did not knowingly omit anything necessary to give validity to his sentence; and the fact is, that the 'custom' in question has come in since Paul's time, and that this clause does not appear in previous decrees of the Congregation of the Index.*

Sixtus V. appointed fifteen Congregations of Cardinals, assigning to each its proper function, but with the limitation 'that they refer to us all the more important and difficult matters under consideration.' It is now customary that the secretary of the Congregation should certify when a matter has been thus referred to the Pope; but clearly the only important question is whether the matter has been thus referred, and not whether the secretary has certified it. Such a certificate was certainly not necessary in the case of the Holy Office, the highest of all the Congregations, having jurisdiction over every member of the Church of whatever rank. On account of its supreme importance, the Pope was wont to be its president, and the votes to be taken in his presence; so that no important decree could go forth without having been first submitted to the Pope. The Pope indisputably did thus take part in the decision in Galileo's case.

Assuredly Galileo and the Copernicans of his day were not allowed to suppose that to persist in their heresy would be to resist anything short of infallible wisdom. They were pressed with the words of the Bull of Sixtus V., by which the Congregation of the Index was remodelled: 'They are to examine and expose the books which are repugnant to the Catholic doctrines and Christian discipline, and after reporting them to us, they are to condemn them *by our authority*.' What was done by the Inquisition in Galileo's case was not a mere verdict on a matter of fact on which the

* Mr. Roberts has not been able to find any decree of the Index with the clause earlier than January 17, 1729. (See *Bullarium*, ed. Lux., vol. xiii., p. 380.)

judges might pardonably go wrong, but it was the decision by the Pope's authority on a question of doctrine. Pope Urban made that decision his own by directing (in 1633) that *in order that these things might be known to all*, copies of the sentence on Galileo were to be transmitted to all Apostolic Nuncios, and all Inquisitors of heretical pravity, especially the Florentine Inquisitors. These were to summon the professors of mathematics and to read the sentence for their instruction. This sentence refers to the interference of the Congregation of the Index as made 'to the end that so pernicious a doctrine' as the Copernican 'might be altogether taken away and spread no further to the heavy detriment of Catholic truth.' It states that the Congregation was held in the Pope's presence in which Galileo was ordered to give up this false opinion. It relates that Galileo had been formally made acquainted with 'the declaration made by our Lord the Pope, and promulgated by the Sacred Congregation of the Index,' the tenor whereof is that the doctrine of the motion of the earth and the fixity of the sun is contrary to the sacred Scriptures, and therefore can neither be defended or held. It may be added that the desired Papal confirmation in express terms was given by a later Pope, Alexander VII., in 1664, who republished and confirmed the previous decrees with the words, 'Cum omnibus et singulis in eo contentis auctoritate Apostolica tenore presentium confirmamus et approbamus.' I really recommend, therefore, Roman apologists to consider again whether it may not be possible to maintain that the sun actually does go round the earth, this being in my judgment quite as hopeful a line of defence as to deny that successive Popes officially asserted that it does.

To conclude, then, the history of Galileo makes short work of the question. Is it possible for the Church of Rome to err in her interpretation of Scripture, or to mistake in what she teaches to be an essential part of the Christian faith? She *can* err, for she *has* erred. She has made many errors more dangerous to the souls of men, but never committed any blunder more calculated to throw contempt on her pretensions in the minds of all thinking men, than when

she persisted for about two hundred years in teaching that it was the doctrine of the Bible, and therefore an essential part of the Catholic faith, that the earth stands still, and that the sun and planets revolve daily round it.

Since this lecture was written, a couple of articles on this subject have been published by Mr. St. George Mivart (*Nineteenth Century*, July, 1885, July, 1887), of which a very brief notice will suffice. Mr. Mivart professes to be a Roman Catholic, but he is fortunate that he did not live two hundred years ago, for if he had then expressed the views he holds now, the Pope, if he had him in his power, would certainly have punished him severely as a contumacious heretic of the worst kind. The Church of Rome changes so much, that what was heretical two hundred years ago may be quite orthodox now, and possibly Mr. Mivart's teaching may hereafter be accepted; but at present it is calculated to try severely the toleration of his ecclesiastical superiors; and his best chance of escape is, that the 'Judge of controversies' will, according to his usual habit, abstain from pronouncing any decision on the questions raised by Mr. Mivart, until the controversy comes to settle itself. Such forbearance is all the more likely, because times have so changed with the Roman Church that she is now glad on any terms to have the credit of having men of science in her communion, and is willing, therefore, to let them say what they like. It does not commit her authority, and may retain waverers of a scientific turn of mind.

Mr. Mivart throws overboard, as any man of common sense would, the subterfuges by which it had been attempted to deny that the highest ecclesiastical authorities were distinctly pledged to the condemnation of Galileo. He says that it has now been ascertained that what is declared by authoritative congregations to be opposed to the teaching of Scripture, of the holy Fathers, and of antecedent ecclesiastical tribunals, concerning a matter of science, may nevertheless be true. His inference is that

Roman Catholic men of science may pursue their investigations regardless of any judgment ecclesiastical tribunals may pronounce on them, it having been proved by the voice of history that it is not to ecclesiastical congregations, but to men of science, that God has committed the elucidation of scientific questions. The freedom thus happily gained for astronomical science, he concludes, extends to all science, geology, biology, sociology, political economy, history, and Biblical criticism; for whatever in fact comes within the reach of human inductive research and is capable of verification. This may be very good doctrine, but it strikes me that it is Protestant and not Roman Catholic doctrine.

Mr. Mivart, however, is only a Protestant as far as regards the subjects in which he himself takes an interest. He has given much attention to biology, and is an authority on that subject, so he claims for himself perfect freedom. He takes much interest in Biblical criticism, and would have no scruple in accepting the most advanced speculations which German rationalists have made concerning the Old Testament, which he imagines are in the main correct, though they may have been pushed to unjustifiable extremes. As far as the Roman Catholic laity are concerned, they are commonly so little acquainted with Scripture, that he would not be surprised if some of them were even disposed to chuckle over a disproof of the Bible's truth, as being a matter likely to 'dish' the Protestants, and so make their own religious position more secure. But he perceives that better instructed Roman Catholics would feel that it would dish themselves too if the Church's teaching on so important a question, from her foundation until now, was proved to be mistaken. He seems to be ignorant that the Vatican Council has asserted the inspiration of Scripture in a way that cannot be reconciled with the speculations of which I speak. But he confesses the reluctance that Roman Catholic divines would feel to adopting conclusions opposed to a unanimous consensus of theologians, and to the ordinary teaching of the Church, which has constantly appealed to Scripture for proof of her doctrines. He however urges that

the basis of doctrines may be taken away and the structure remain unharmed. Are not the Pseudo-Isidorian Decretals now given up as spurious by all learned men, but the system of doctrines founded on them remains? Do we not now know that the arguments used at many Councils are utterly bad, but the conclusions obtained by these arguments remain in full force? This reads like sarcasm, but I imagine that Mr. Mivart has written it in all sincerity.

It is not my business now to discuss all the questions raised by Mr. Mivart. I am only concerned with the question of infallibility; and I see no good reason why on this subject Mr. Mivart should only go half way towards Protestant. He claims a right to disregard the instructions of his infallible guide on every subject capable of verification, but he implies that he is ready to accept those instructions if no verifications be possible. This is much the same as if we were to say to a traveller who had told us some marvellous tales, I cannot believe what you have told us about France, Portugal, and North America, because I have been there, and I know that what you have told us is a pack of lies; but I will believe with all my heart everything you have said about China and Japan, because I have never been in these countries, and therefore cannot contradict you. Mr. Mivart ought to remember that there are other sciences besides those in which he himself takes an interest; such as the science of history, and especially of the history of dogma. Let him take the word of those who have studied these matters, that on many of the questions on which Roman Catholics differ from Protestants, the teaching of the Church of Rome is as opposed to the testimony of facts as the old theory which Galileo overturned. Had we not a parallel case to Galileo's the other day when an expert, von Döllinger, was excommunicated because he would not accept a conclusion which the voice of history condemns? Whenever Mr. Mivart sees his way to give the human mind not a partial but complete freedom, the dispute with him concerning the infallibility of the Church is at an end.

XV.

THE GALLICAN THEORY OF INFALLIBILITY.

THE branch of the subject which I will now take up is the discussion of the different theories as to the organ of the Church's infallibility which have been held in the Roman Church. I will not dwell on what I have already said: that if the gift of infallibility had been believed in and exercised from the first, it was impossible that controversy as to its seat should ever arise.

The theory which I shall first consider is the Gallican, which places the infallibility in the Church diffusive. In this theory the Pope is only the leading bishop of Christendom, and is by no means a necessary organ in proclaiming infallible truth. Whatever doctrine the whole Church agrees in is infallibly true. Of course this characteristic cannot be predicated of any doctrine from which the Pope dissents, since such a dissent would deprive the doctrine of that universality of acceptance which the theory imposes as a condition; but if a Pope declares a doctrine, it is nevertheless not guaranteed as infallibly true if a Council dissent; or even though Pope and Council declare it, if it is not received by the bishops throughout the world. The important thing is, the universality of acceptance: the mode of promulgation is immaterial. It may be the Pope who proclaims it, and a Council which assents; it may be a Council whose decrees the Pope confirms, or it may be a number of small local councils which declare the Church's sentiments: only let the consent of the Church be evidenced in whatever way, and the doctrine is infallibly true. I will presently examine whether this is a defensible theory of

infallibility; but I wish first to tell you a little of the history of Gallicanism.

Its most flourishing time was at the end of the seventeenth century, in the reign of Louis XIV. That monarch had many points of resemblance with Henry VIII. With regard to their relations with women, Louis was certainly not the purer of the two; but as he did not want, like Henry, to marry the women on whom his caprice fixed, his frailties caused no irreconcilable breach with the Church. He could part with his mistresses in Lent, and then when he had received his Easter Communion take them back again. Meanwhile his zeal for orthodoxy was extreme. He stirred up the slumbering authorities at Rome to fulminate against Jansenism. By bribery and intimidation, by the dragonnades and the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, he worked so hard for the extirpation of Protestantism from France, that he was hailed by the enthusiastic gratitude of his bishops. 'Impressed by such marvels,' exclaimed Bossuet in one of his orations, 'let us raise our acclamations to the skies. Let us say to this second Constantine, this second Theodosius, this second Charlemagne, what the six hundred and thirty bishops said of old at the Council of Chalcedon: "You have confirmed the faith, you have exterminated the heretics; it is a work worthy of your reign. Through your exertions heresy exists no longer. God alone could have wrought this miracle. O King of Heaven preserve our earthly monarch: this is the prayer of the Church—this is the prayer of the bishops."'

Unfortunately Louis, who was quite as imperious as Henry, was as arbitrary in his dealings with the Pope as with his own subjects. Those of you who have read Macaulay's history of the circumstances which facilitated the English Revolution of 1688 will remember how the Pope's sympathy for the enterprise of William was gained by the tyrannical behaviour of Louis towards himself. Because the Pope wished to withdraw a privilege which had made his own capital insecure, that, namely, of allowing the French ambassador's palace to be a sanctuary for brigands and assassins, the King sent his troops to take possession of the Papal ter-

ritory at Avignon. There had been an earlier controversy, originating in Royal claims, which the Pope repudiated as a novel aggression, with respect to the appointment and institution to benefices; and these led to a conflict between the King and the Pope, which lasted about a dozen years. Though the King had been granted by the Roman See the right of appointment to bishoprics, yet while the controversy lasted the Pope would not institute the King's nominees; so that before the dispute was over there were thirty-five bishops without institution. The French appealed to a future general Council; they threatened to dispense with the authority of the Pope, and to consecrate their bishops without it, and to stop all sending of money to Rome. The French bishops naturally took the side of their King, whose influence in his own country was overpowering; and it was while the relations between France and Rome were thus strained that what are called the Four Gallican Propositions of 1682, drawn up by the celebrated Bossuet, were formulated.

These are as follows:—The first declared that the power possessed by Peter and his successors was in things spiritual, not in things temporal; in accordance with the texts, 'My kingdom is not of this world'; 'Render unto Cæsar,' &c.; 'Let every soul be subject to the higher powers.' Consequently, kings are not, by the law of God, subject to any ecclesiastical power with respect to their temporal government, nor can their subjects be released from the duty of obeying them, nor absolved from their oath of allegiance. 2. The second defined the power of the Pope in things spiritual, viz. as such that the decrees of the Council of Constance, approved as they are by the Holy See and the practice of the whole Church, remain in full force and perpetual obligation; and it declared that these decrees must not be depreciated as insufficiently approved or as restricted to a time of schism.—I may remind you that these decrees declared that a general Council, legitimately assembled, derives its authority immediately from Christ [and therefore not from the Pope], and that every person of what dignity soever, *even papal*, is

bound to obey it in what relates to the faith, or to the extirpation of schism, or to the reformation of the Church in its head and members. If you remember the circumstances of the Church at the time of the Council of Constance, you will see that these decrees were absolutely necessary at the time. The object was to heal the schism, there being then three claimants of the Popedom, each of whom had some who believed him to be the real Pope. The Council deposed all three, and elected a new Pope; and as although the whole Christian world longed for an end to the schism, all the pontiffs had shown great reluctance to a voluntary resignation, it is evident the act of the Council could not meet with universal recognition unless it was maintained that the Council had an authority higher than the papal, and was able even to depose a real Pope if the good of the Church required it. 3. The third Gallican decree declared that the exercise of the Apostolic authority must be regulated by the canons enacted by the Spirit of God and consecrated by the reverence of the whole world; in particular that the ancient rules, customs, and institutions of the realm and Church of France must remain inviolable. 4. The fourth, that though the Pope has the principal power in deciding questions of faith, and though his decrees extend to all Churches, nevertheless his judgment is not irreversible until confirmed by the consent of the Church.—Thus you see that these decrees took away altogether the Pope's temporal power over countries of which he was not the civil sovereign; that in spiritual things they limited his disciplinary power by general and local canons; that even in matters of faith they held that his decisions needed to be ratified by universal consent.

A point has been made by a Roman Catholic controversialist who wrote in answer to Janus, that the French bishops were not unanimous on this occasion. But the fact is, that the chief opposition Bossuet encountered was from those who went further than himself in denying the prerogatives of Rome. His chief opponent, the Bishop of Tournay, held that the Apostolic See was liable to fall into heresy. Bossuet's own opinion was that, though individual Popes might be

carried away by some temporary blast of false doctrine, the See would never fall permanently into misbelief, as some Eastern Sees had done, but that by the interposition of right-thinking people either the erring Pope himself or his successors would be brought back to the true faith. In this way the fall of Liberius or the monothelism of Honorius presented no difficulty to his theory.

Though the four Gallican propositions expressed, as I believe, the real opinion of the French Church, yet I believe also that but for Court pressure Bossuet and his colleagues would not have engaged in the controversy with Rome which the act of formulating these propositions involved. And this was one cause of the want of permanence of Gallicanism, that so much of its strength consisted in the Royal support: or rather that the contest was not so much one between the French nation and a foreign power as between the King and the Pope, which of the two should have the filling up of livings and soforth. It was exactly in the same way that Henry VIII. gave a national character to what may also be represented as a conflict in which only his personal interests were involved. It is evident that in such a conflict, if the King failed to persuade the nation that his interests were theirs;—if, for instance, his appointments to offices were not made to deserving men,—then really religious men would be indifferent to a contest which they might look on as one between a self-seeking king and a self-seeking foreign bishop; and they would be on the side of the bishop if they thought his government on the whole likely to be guided by higher aims. On these grounds, much as we are inclined to sympathize with the anti-papalism of the Gallican bishops, I have my doubts whether these hangers-on of the Court of Louis XIV. really carried the religious mind of the nation with them. The doctrine, however, which they taught as to the limits of the papal power was no new invention of theirs; it but stated the tradition of the Gallican Church, which had been expressed on many former occasions.

Ultimately the dispute between Louis and the Pope was settled: the King withdrew measures he had taken for enforc-

ing the Gallican declaration in his dominions, and the bishops seeking consecration were allowed to say that they were sorry it had been made, which did not at all imply that they believed it was not true. A great magazine of arguments in this controversy is the book which Bossuet wrote in defence of the Gallican declaration. It was more than once withheld from publication by the royal authority, lest it should impede the desired reconciliation with Rome, and was not actually published until after Bossuet's death.

The subsequent history of Gallicanism will not take long to state. The fruits of the zeal of Louis in suppressing heresy showed themselves after his death. The Jansenists, whom it had been the work of his life to put down, whatever may have been their doctrinal errors, were some of the holiest and best men in his kingdom. I need not tell you how much of true religion was lost to France by the driving out of the Huguenots: the consequence was that Christianity, represented in that kingdom by its most superstitious form, revolted the philosophic and enlightened. The principle of blind submission to authority was found to be too weak to maintain the hearty faith of the people, and a great wave of infidelity swept over the land. In an early stage of the revolutionary troubles an attempt was made to maintain a national Church in France, though robbed of the greater part of its worldly wealth. A new distribution of Sees was made: bishops were to be elected by their flocks, and were to seek for no institution from the Pope, but merely notify to him the fact of their appointment. By a very unwise step on the part of the framers of this new constitution, all the clergy were required to swear their acceptance, and a number of the most respected refused. Thereupon ensued an immediate schism between the constitutional clergy and the non-jurors: and as in the progress of events the leaders of the revolutionary party showed more and more hostility to religion, so the respect of religious men refused to attach itself to the constitutional clergy, who were found in alliance with deists and atheists.

When the great Napoleon discerned the political necessity of coming to terms with Christianity, he saw that an agree-

ment with the Pope afforded him the only practicable means. Even more than Louis XIV., Napoleon sought to make himself absolute over Church and State in France, and he thought that if he could make the Pope absolute over the French clergy he could direct the Pope as he pleased. The Pope proved less flexible than Napoleon had anticipated, but in the first stage of the reconciliation his help was absolutely necessary and was given. The terms of a new Episcopate were arranged into which survivors both of the constitutional clergy and the non-jurors were to be admitted. But however desirable in every way to the cause of the Church in France was this reconciliation, it involved a complete abandonment of Gallican principles. For it was by the Pope's authority that the existing bishops were forced to resign and a new distribution of Sees effected. This course of events produced a natural reaction in France in favour of Ultramontanism, all the abominations and impieties of republican fanaticism being imputed, however unjustly, to the opposite system. This reaction found an eloquent representative in the Count Joseph de Maistre, whose writings exercised a prodigious influence in France: so that the dying away of Gallicanism in its birthplace and stronghold seemed to make things easy for its formal condemnation by Pius IX.

We in Ireland are interested in Gallicanism because, before the establishment of Maynooth, Irish priests commonly got their education in Continental schools where Gallican principles predominated, and so imported them into this country. At Maynooth itself French text-books were used. In the agitation for Emancipation a prevalent argument against granting it was that Roman Catholics could not be loyal subjects, since they would serve two masters, or rather indeed only one, inasmuch as they must obey the Pope if he forbade them to obey their Sovereign. In reply to this, great pains were taken by the advocates for Emancipation to show that Irish Roman Catholics did not believe in the Pope's power to release subjects from their allegiance, and that the Ultramontane doctrine of the Papal power was not recognized as any part of the doc-

trine of their Church. The Irish Roman Catholic bishops were examined before a Parliamentary Committee, and gave evidence which was afterwards cited by the American bishop Kenrick, himself an Irishman, at the Vatican Council. As a sample of their evidence, I will give you Archbishop Murray's answer to the question whether the Irish bishops had adopted or rejected what are called the Gallican liberties. He said, 'These liberties have not come under their consideration as a body. The Irish Catholic bishops have therefore not either adopted or rejected them. They have adopted, however, and that on their oaths, the leading doctrines which these liberties contain; that is, the doctrines which reject the deposing power of the popes and their right to interfere with the temporalities of princes. That is distinctly recognized not as one of the Gallican liberties, but as a doctrine which the Gospel teaches.' Bishop Doyle said that if the Pope were to intermeddle with the temporal rights of the King, they would oppose him even by the exercise of their spiritual authority; that is, as he explained it, by preaching the Gospel to the people, and instructing them, in such a case, to oppose the Pope. Besides this repudiation of the temporal power of the Pope, these bishops declared their opinion that the authority of the Pope in spiritual matters was limited by the Canons and by the Councils, and they swore, as they could then with truth, that the doctrine of the Pope's personal infallibility was no part of the Christian faith. Soon after they gave a practical proof of their independence of the Pope; for when a negotiation between the Pope and the English Government resulted in an agreement that, as a condition of Emancipation, the English Government should be given a veto on the nomination to Irish bishoprics, the Irish bishops remonstrated with the Pope in such strong terms that the project had to be abandoned.

I have dwelt, at a little length, on the history of Gallicanism because the subject is one on which you do not find much information in your text-books; but we must now consider the truth of the doctrine, that whatever the whole Church at any time agrees in may be relied on as infallibly correct. One

thing is plain, namely, that if this is the nature of the gift of infallibility Christ has bestowed on His Church, the gift is absolutely useless for the determination of controversies. It is very comfortable to believe with regard to the controversies of former days that the winning side was right, and that whatever has settled down to be the general belief is certainly true: but what guidance does such a persuasion give us as long as the controversy is going on? It is very comfortable for Roman Catholics now to think that the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception must be true because it has ceased to be disputed in their communion. But how could the Dominicans foresee the turn things would take a century after their time, when they knew that the doctrine they opposed was altogether novel, condemned by Aquinas, and unknown to the early Fathers? This theory, then, asserts that Christ has furnished His Church with a lantern which throws no light on the path in front, but only on that which has been already traversed.

Something of the same kind may be said about the oft-quoted phrase of Vincentius Lirinensis, that we believe 'Quod semper, quod ubique, quod ab omnibus traditum est.' It is very pleasant when we can say this; but it is obvious that this rule can give us no help in a controversy; for, clearly, dispute can only arise in the case of a doctrine which is not held 'ab omnibus,' and in such a case both parties are sure to say that it is their opinion which has been held 'semper.' And so when people go to use the rule they generally explain that of course 'held by all' does not mean absolutely and literally all without exception, but leaves out of account heretics and such like; so that 'all' means only 'all right-thinking persons,' and in this way it is in the power of each side to claim their own view as being held by all, that is to say, all right-thinking persons, for they are the only right-thinking persons.

We can see thus that the Gallican method of ascribing infallibility to the Church diffusive does not satisfy any of the *a priori* supposed proofs of the necessity of a judge of controversies, on the strength of which infallibility has been

believed in. Yet unquestionably it is this aspect of the theory of infallibility which has most power in gaining adherents. It is certainly a very alluring doctrine that whatever is held by the majority of the Christian world must certainly be true, and that dissentients, if few in number, may be disregarded without any examination of their opinions. It is plain from Dr. Newman's account of his life that this was the argument which made a convert of him. He compared the numbers which were ranked on the Romish side and on the opposite, and he said, 'What is the English Church that she should set herself in opposition to so much larger a body?' Words of Augustine that he had seen quoted in controversy, 'securus judicat orbis terrarum,' at last so took possession of his imagination, that he was compelled to abandon further resistance.

These words, as used by Augustine, were, I believe, well justified, and are capable of further application. They were employed with reference to the claim of the Donatists of Africa to unchurch the rest of Christendom, because they continued to hold communion with men who, as the Donatists alleged, had been guilty of gross sin. Augustine replied that the whole world was, by reason of distance, incapable of judging of the reality of these alleged offences, but that they could judge safely enough of the blind temerity of those who without provocation separated themselves from the rest of the world.* Taken thus in connexion with their context, Augustine's words are only reasonable; nor would I hesitate to extend them to other cases in which small bodies venture to unchurch and anathematize the whole Christian world: Baptists, for example, excluding from the pale of the visible Church all who have been baptized by affusion, not immersion; Walkerites and Plymouth Brethren reducing their

* In the notes to an Ordination Sermon published in 1864, Dr. Quarry pointed out that in the passage cited, St. Augustine did not lay down a general maxim, nor assert that the 'orbis terrarum' must always be right in its judgment. The words form part of a sentence in which, after showing that foreign Churches must needs be ill-acquainted with the facts of the African disputes, he concludes, 'securus judicat orbis terrarum' that they are not good who separate themselves from the whole world; where the word 'securus' appears to have its most literal sense, without anxiety.

Church to still narrower limits. If things are alleged to be necessary to salvation, or necessary to the being of a Church, which Christ has revealed so indistinctly that the great bulk of the Christian world has for centuries been unable to find them out, then I do say that the claim is one which condemns itself, and that the Christian world 'securus judicat' that such pretensions are unfounded.

But in this matter the Donatist party, not the orthodox, are the true antitypes of the Church of Rome. That Church, like these African schismatics of old, endeavours to cast out of the Church of Christ all who will not bind themselves in close alliance with her; and the body which she would fain exclude is in the number of its adherents, and the extent of territory which they occupy, far more considerable than that to which Augustine gave the title 'orbis terrarum.' If there be weight in the maxim which has been made out of Augustine's words, we may rely on our numbers, and securely smile at the pretension to unchurch us. But certainly we repudiate Augustine's words when severed from their context, and converted into a rule that numbers constitute a trustworthy test of truth, and that a body so large as to be able fairly to call itself 'orbis terrarum' can be guilty of no error. How would such a rule have worked in the days when Athanasius was alone against the world, when the violence of the Arian hurricane carried the Pope Liberius away, when a Council twice as large as the Nicene omitted 'homoousios' from their creed, and, in the words of Jerome, the whole world groaned in surprise to find itself Arian? 'Ingemuit orbis terrarum et Arianum se esse miratus est.' Nay, how would such a rule have worked when the first preachers of Christianity went forth to arraign the superstitions of the whole world, attacking beliefs of immemorial antiquity, and supported by Catholic consent?—for it was generally held that under different names all nations agreed in worshipping the same divinities. Even at the present day can the Christian religion bear to have its truth submitted to the test of numbers, and can it permit its claim to be set aside if it can be proved that the number of its adherents (counting all the

different sects into which Christianity is divided) is surpassed by the number of those who either are ignorant of Christianity or reject it? I know no Scripture warrant for asserting that the broad path along which the many go must be the safe one, or that, either in religious matters or in temporal, men can be sure of not going wrong, provided only that, like sheep, they stick together.

Perhaps it may be objected that I am here leaving out of sight Christ's promises to His Church that He would be with her always, and that the gates of Hades should not prevail against her. I grant that Protestant controversialists have often contradicted these texts in the violence of their language against Rome. They have represented her as so wholly corrupt as to have lost the very being of a Church, and so that salvation in her is practically impossible. According to this theory, then, it must be owned that the gates of Hades did prevail against the Church for some centuries before the Reformation; since for so long a time grievous corruptions had infected Christian teaching; and it is sought, with very imperfect success, to trace through some obscure heretics a succession of witnesses to the truth. Overwrought descriptions of the corruptions of the Roman Church not uncommonly produce a reaction in her favour. The historical student, in studying the history of the mediæval Church, may perhaps discover that the witnesses to Protestant truth are comparatively few and broken, leaving great gaps in the tradition: possibly he may find that some whom he might have been disposed to claim as on his side turn out, on closer acquaintance, not to have been as estimable as he had imagined, and either to have been immoral in their lives, or to have denied some doctrines which he regards as of the essence of the Christian faith. Perhaps it may be possible to produce on the side of the established Church, at the same date, some men whose writings show their love to Christ, and their firm grasp of some of the fundamental truths of the Gospel, or whose lives prove them to have been animated by the sincerest Christian charity. Then it often happens that the student wheels round and expresses his conviction that it

was not the heretics but the established clergy who constituted the true Church at the time, and consequently that it is the latter whose teaching is to be accepted as true.

It is astonishing how, even in the minds of Protestants, infallibility has come to be regarded as an essential attribute of the Church, so that they think that if they acknowledge the Church exists at all, they must acknowledge that all she teaches is true, just as if one might not be a very good and pious man, and yet hold many erroneous opinions; or as if, on the other hand, a man might not get correct hold of certain true and important principles, and yet push them to unwarrantable extremes, and draw erroneous conclusions from them. For my part, as a candid disputant, I have not the least desire to shut my eyes to anything in the Roman Church that is really good. All I say is, that what I own to be good has its roots not in those things which I stigmatize as corruptions, but in those principles which Roman Catholics hold in common with us, especially the great principle of love to our blessed Lord. When once the acknowledgment has been made that the fact that a man's having errors in his system of doctrine does not prove that he has ceased to retain the essence of the faith, the whole argument breaks down which is founded on God's promises to His Church. Granted that we have the assurance that the being of the Church will not be overthrown, nor her main doctrines lost, nor salvation in her become impossible, where is the assurance that if Christians attempt to determine a number of speculative points, by no means essential to the faith, the majority of them will arrive at infallibly certain conclusions? Nay, where is the assurance that no humanly-devised additions will crust over and obscure the deposit of truth which is retained? According to our view of the progress of Christianity in the world, we may liken it to a stream first breaking forth in crystal purity from its native source, but as its waters are swelled by many a tributary, and as it flows through many a land, discoloured by taints derived from the soils through which it passes; yet, even after it has lost its first purity and brightness, still able to confer many blessings on the countries

which it fertilizes, while nevertheless they who drink of it at a distance from its source find it not superfluous to filter away its accumulated defilements, and so restore it to its original brightness. Now how is such a view as this affected by any considerations which make it reasonable to believe that the waters of the river will never cease to flow?

When we actually study Church history we see that there were many causes in operation having a tendency to introduce into the stream of Christian teaching the defilements of which I have spoken. There was the influx of heathen into the Church, bringing with them their own systems of philosophy, and applying them to their new faith; there was the desire to conciliate prejudice by the softening of what in Christianity might give offence; and there were, finally, principles of fallen human nature itself, ever seeking to be gratified, and having thus a tendency to corrupt what had been committed to it. No one now ventures to deny that the tone of Church teaching has not been uniformly the same from age to age: doctrines assume importance which in former times were little dwelt on, and in many cases what was at first conjecture or pious opinion passes by degrees into a fixed and unquestioned article of belief. This fact of gradual growth, not to say alteration of doctrine, which was long vainly denied by Roman Catholic advocates, is now generally admitted by them, and a power is claimed for the Church, not indeed of publishing revelations of totally new doctrine, and proposing them for articles of faith, but at least of developing old doctrines, and drawing from them consequences unsuspected by those who held them in former generations.

This theory sets aside completely the old Roman Catholic rule of Scripture and tradition. It gives up tradition; and it must in consistency abandon as completely irrational that respect for the Fathers, which even still distinguishes uneducated Romanists from uneducated Protestants. In earthly science Lord Bacon pointed out that the fathers were the children. If we think an old man likely to be wiser than a young one, it is because he has had so much more

experience, and is likely to know many things of which the young man is ignorant. But the world is older now than it ever was. To ask us to defer to the opinion of men who lived two centuries ago, and who consequently were ignorant of all that the world has learned in the last two hundred years, is as absurd as to ask a trained philosopher to defer to the opinion of a youth just commencing his studies. And if the theory of the development of Christian doctrine be true, the same rule exactly ought to hold with regard to religious truth; and a Romanist cannot consistently censure a Protestant if he thinks Luther and Calvin teachers likely to be twelve centuries wiser than Chrysostom and Augustine. But if in the theory of Development the Fathers lose all claims to respect, it is still worse with Scripture: the Fathers may have been but children, but the Apostles were only infants. They lived when the Church had but just come into being, and before it had learned all that the Holy Spirit has taught it in the course of nineteen centuries. If so, it ought to be only for curiosity that we need look into books written in the very infancy of the Church; and to seek for our system of Christian doctrine in the Bible would be as absurd as to try to learn the differential calculus from the writings of Archimedes. In other words, the theory of Development, as taught by Cardinal Newman, substantially abandons the claims of Christianity to be regarded as a supernatural revelation which is likely to be preserved in most purity by those who lived nearest to the times when it was given.

And yet there is such a thing as a real development of Christian doctrine. We acknowledge that all the precious truth of Scripture does not lie on the surface, and that continuous study applied to the Bible, by holy men who have sought for the aid of God's Spirit, does elicit much that might have escaped a hasty reader, but which, when once pointed out, remains for the instruction of future generations. But we draw a distinction between things essential to salvation and things true, but not necessary. The way of salvation does not alter from age to age; those truths which were effectual for the salvation of souls in the second or third

century are sufficient for salvation still. We hold that, therefore, a Church takes a step unjustifiable, and which must lead to schism, if she imposes new articles of faith to be held of necessity for salvation which were unknown to the Church of past times.

Again, there is a development of Christian doctrine due to the increase of human philosophy and learning. It is impossible to prevent these from playing their part in modifying our way of understanding the Bible. For instance, in the case which has already come before us, that of Galileo, we see that the progress of astronomical knowledge not only modified the manner in which texts of Scripture were understood which seemed to teach the immobility of the earth, but also made Christians understand that God, who does not work miracles to do for men what He intended them to learn to do for themselves, did not mean the Bible as a supernatural revelation of the truths of astronomy or other sciences, but left the attainment of knowledge of this kind to stimulate and reward the exercise of men's natural powers.

Well, when it is agreed on all hands that the Church of one age may be on several points wiser than the Church of a preceding age, the Gallican theory of infallibility at once breaks down. According to that theory it is consistent with God's promises to His Church that disputes, and consequently that uncertainty, on several important points of doctrine, should prevail for a considerable time; only it is maintained that when once the majority of Christians have agreed in a conclusion about them, that conclusion must never afterwards be called in question. But why not, if the Church has in the meantime become wiser? If God, without injustice and without danger to men's souls, can leave many of His people for a considerable time imperfectly informed, and even in erroneous opinion as to certain doctrines, what improbability is there that He may have left a whole generation imperfectly or erroneously informed on the same subject, and reserved the perception of the complete truth for their successors?

Before concluding this part of the subject I ought to say

a few words as to Dr. Pusey's theory of infallibility, which substantially agrees with that I have just examined, which places it in the Church diffusive. Dr. Pusey could find no language too strong to condemn the principle of private judgment, and was heartily willing to submit his own judgment to that of the Church; only it must be the united Church. If the whole Church agree in any statement of doctrine that must be infallibly certain. But unhappily, for the last twelve centuries the Church has been rent by schism, and does not agree with itself in its utterances. All that was decreed before the great schism between East and West is undoubtedly true, and no individual dare re-open these questions; and if now the Roman, Greek, and Anglican communions (for to these Dr. Pusey limited the Church) could be united again, the gift of infallibility would revive; but in the Church's present disunited condition the gift is dormant. I am not prepared to say that this is not a legitimate extension of the Gallican theory, for if universal consent is necessary to the propounding of an infallible decision, how can that condition be said to be satisfied when full half the company of baptized Christians dissent? But Pusey's Roman Catholic critics have seen very clearly that his theory is a *reductio ad absurdum* of the proof of the existence of an infallible guide. Most persons would agree that if God saw it to be necessary to bestow on His Church the gift of infallibility for several hundred years, it is likely she has the gift still; and, conversely, it is easier to believe that the gift was never bestowed than that it was given on such conditions that the exercise of it has proved for more than a thousand years to be practically impossible. One of Dr. Pusey's Roman Catholic critics says, very reasonably from his point of view, 'To say that the Church has practically ceased to be infallible for twelve centuries out of eighteen, is to say that the Holy Ghost has failed of His mission during two-thirds of the lifetime of the Church which He was by Divine promise to lead into all truth.'*

* Harper, *Peace through the Truth*, I. lxi.

XVI.

GENERAL COUNCILS.

Part I.

I COME to-day to speak of that theory which makes General Councils the main organ of the Church's infallibility, a theory of historic interest, but which now is rapidly becoming obsolete. In fact the general arguments for the necessity of an infallible judge to determine controversies are not satisfied by such a judge as a Council, since that judge is not always at hand, there having been whole centuries without Councils; while the mode of settling disputes by consulting the decisions of past Councils is liable to the same objections as that by consulting the Scriptures, with the additional objection that the former are so much more voluminous. In the Roman Church at present there is so little disposition unduly to exalt the authority of Councils, that the topics which come before us to-day may almost be said to be no part of the Roman Catholic controversy, the greater part of all I wish to assert being not now controverted. The dispute in the Roman Church, concerning the organ of the Church's Infallibility, has had the natural effect that those who claim that prerogative for the Pope, and whose ascendency was completely established at the Vatican Council of 1870, have been quite as anxious as we can be, that no rival claim for Councils shall be allowed to establish itself. Consequently, when I shall presently produce evidence that even those Councils, to whose decisions we cordially assent, were composed of frail and fallible men; that the proceedings of some of them were conducted in a way that does not command our respect, and that the ultimate triumph of orthodoxy was due to other causes besides

the decisions of these Councils, I am trying to prove no more than has been asserted by eminent Roman Catholic divines, as, for example, by Cardinal Newman. But it would not be safe to take quite silent possession of territory which our adversaries have evacuated only in comparatively recent times; and it is necessary to give some examination to the claims of Councils, because it was to these venerable bodies that the attribute of infallibility first attached itself; and in the early stages of the Reformation those who resisted the authority of the Pope declared themselves willing to submit to the authority of a General Council freely assembled.

Local Councils.—Local Councils took their origin almost inevitably, as you will easily see, from the fact that Christian Churches in different towns regarded themselves as all belonging to one great society. We know that in apostolic times a Church would separate from her communion a member who had disgraced himself by immorality of a scandalous kind; so in like manner would one be rejected who denied the fundamental doctrines of the Christian faith. Now in modern times excommunication has ceased to be an effective penalty, on account of the want of harmonious action between the different bodies into which Christendom is divided. If a man is put out of communion by one body, he finds quite a welcome reception in another. It was not so in the early Church. A Christian migrating from one town to another had only to take with him credentials from his original Church, and he was received on equal terms in his new abode. But one whom his own Church censured found the doors of other Churches also closed to him until those censures had been withdrawn. This mutual recognition of each other's acts made it necessary that one Church should be permitted to review the acts of another. If a bishop were arbitrary and wrong-headed, and excommunicated an innocent man, it were surely unreasonable if no redress were possible; and a Church could scarcely insist on keeping out of communion a man elsewhere condemned for false doctrine, without investigating his case, if he protested that he was perfectly orthodox, and that it

was the bishop who had censured him whose views were eccentric. My belief is, that it was the review of excommunications for ratification or rejection which constituted the chief business of the Councils of neighbouring bishops, which we know to have met periodically in very early times.

One of the most interesting examples I know of an attempt, by means of local Councils, to collect the opinion of the universal Church, was in the case of the Quartodeciman controversy at the end of the second century. You all, no doubt, know how the attempt of Victor of Rome to put the Asiatic Churches out of the communion of the Church universal was frustrated by the resistance of Irenæus. There is reason to think that Victor did not move in this matter without provocation. Churches distant from each other might celebrate Easter on different days without serious inconvenience; but it would evidently be intolerable if some members of a Church made it a matter of conscience to refuse to conform to the prescribed rule of that Church, and insisted on holding their feast, while their brethren around were still keeping the preliminary fast. I consider that it was the schismatical attempt of a presbyter, Blastus, thus to force Quartodecimanism on the Church of Rome, which moved Victor to endeavour to put an end to diversity of practice. Now it is important that you should know that Victor did not make his attempt without first writing to the leading bishops in different parts of the Christian world, asking them to report to him the practice of their Church;* and it was only when he had thus obtained evidence that the Asiatic Quartodecimanism was a mere local custom, and that the practice of the rest of the Christian world was to keep Easter on the Sunday, that he thought himself strong enough to call on the dissentients to conform or be excommunicated.

Obviously it was only by a number of separate Councils that the opinion of the collective episcopate could be ascertained in heathen times. The collection into one city of such a representation of the Christian episcopate as was assembled

* This appears from the letter of Polycrates (Euseb. *H. E.* v. 27).

under the Christian emperors would, in heathen times, have been a challenge for persecution; and even if the meeting had been safe, a majority of the bishops could not have borne the expense of the long journey. When Constantine afterwards gathered all the bishops to Nicæa, he had them conveyed free of charge, putting all the posting resources of the Empire at their disposal.

General Councils.—Coming now to speak of General Councils, I feel it to be a disagreeable thing that the extravagant claims made by our adversaries for both Popes and Councils force me to dwell on the frailties and imperfections of what is on the whole entitled to the respect and gratitude of the Church. It is a disagreeable thing when a man for whom you have on many grounds respect and liking is proposed with extravagant laudations as a candidate for a situation for which you believe him to be totally unfit. If it is impossible for you to acquiesce, the mistaken zeal of his friends may then force you to give proof of his unfitness, by stating things over which, if you might, you would gladly have cast a veil. It would be a disgrace to Christianity if the bishops of its principal see did not include among them many men of piety, learning, and zeal, who had done much benefit to the Church. Much rather would I dwell on the services bishops of Rome have rendered to the Church, than on the frailties, immoralities, or heresies which have disfigured that chair; but when Rome is made the hinge on which the whole Church turns—the rock on which it rests—then it is necessary to give proof that Rome has not strength to bear the weight which it is proposed to lay upon it. Similarly I should be glad to dwell altogether on the services rendered by Councils to the Church; but when claims are made for the authority of Councils to which they have no pretensions, we are forced to give evidence how unfounded these claims are. It is no pleasure to me to bring before you the proofs that those who took part in the early Councils were men of like passions with ourselves. Many of them, I doubt not, were holy men; several of them learned and wise men. When they met together in assemblies there was good reason

for thinking that the blessing of God would rest on their deliberations. He has promised to them that ask Him His Spirit to guide them into truth; and He has made a special promise to prayer offered where two or three are assembled in His name. Experience, however, has taught us that two men, both of whom pray for the Spirit's guidance, will often arrive at opposite conclusions—a fact which may be explained, first, by the human passions, from which even the best are not free, and which cannot but affect the correctness of the conclusions arrived at by those whose breasts they stir (for it is not wonderful that the Holy Spirit should not completely clear from error the minds of those whose hearts He does not completely clear from sin); and, secondly, by the fact that the disagreements of which I speak often relate to matters which, however important they may appear to the disputants, we may well believe do not affect the essentials of the Faith. Thus, we who, when an assembly of ourselves meet together to consult on questions affecting the interests of the Church, invoke God's Spirit to assist our deliberations, and expect to receive a real answer to our prayers, need not hesitate to believe that the prayers made for His presence with the Fathers at the early Councils were not made in vain. Yet, as we do not expect any such assembly of our own to be free from error, so we hold that even the most venerable assembly of former times consisted of imperfect men, who were collectively as well as individually fallible. Nor have we any reason to suppose that their deliberations were unaffected by perturbations of human passions.

With regard to such exhibitions of human passion, I may quote the apology made in the *Tablet* (R. C. newspaper) for some stormy scenes at the Vatican Council in 1870. It said: 'The human element comes out so strongly in some of the Fathers that a sensitive and unwise or thoughtless spectator might easily be shocked and scandalized. We ought to be in no way astonished if angry expressions, sharp comments, unworthy plans, and vexatious agitations did from time to time betray the passions to which human nature is subject. If this were ten times worse than

it is, it would probably be less than many of the most important early Councils have witnessed.'

What is here said of the display of human passions at early Councils is no more than the truth; but this does not at all affect the real value of the transactions of these bodies. This value I hold to be, not any special infallibility attaching to their decisions, but the witness they bear to the belief of the Church of their day. At Nicæa, for instance, we are told that Constantine's first act was to burn unread the mutually accusatory *libelli* of the bishops. And when we read further, in praise of the orthodoxy of the Fathers, that they stopped their ears and refused to listen to the blasphemy of Arius, an Arian might conclude that his master had got no fair hearing. But if the Nicene Fathers are on that account entitled to the less respect as judges, they are all the better witnesses. Imagine an assembly of the English clergy called after the publication of Bishop Colenso's book: who can doubt that there would be much violence and clamour; that many would condemn without having read; that many would be incompetent from want of learning to form an opinion of much value? Yet, however unjudicial all this might be, it would put beyond controversy that the opinions condemned were novelties repudiated, and felt to be in the highest degree offensive, by the bulk of the English clergy. And so the Nicene Council has done us the inestimable service of showing beyond controversy that, at the beginning of the fourth century, the denial of our Lord's co-eternity with the Father was regarded as an offensive novelty. The voice of an overwhelming majority of a body, very well entitled to represent the Church of the time, gives us a compendious assurance of their sentiments, which would be ill replaced by the results of searching and weighing the sentiments of individual writers. The function of Councils at any time in witnessing to the opinion of the Church at that time is most important; and if we value the earlier Councils more than the later, it is because, as we hold that the Christian truth is to be attained not by a new revelation, but by handing down faithfully the old revelation, it is far more important for us to

know what was believed in the early Church than in the later.

But, indeed, belief in the infallibility of Councils can hardly be held by anyone who has studied the history of Councils, and who knows anything of their violence and party spirit, and of the bad arguments on the strength of which many of their infallible conclusions were arrived at. Any proofs of these that I could lay before you could scarcely establish more than is acknowledged by Romanist writers. Cardinal Manning fairly gives up the attempt to defend the goodness of the arguments used at Councils, and declares that the Holy Spirit only guarantees the truth of the conclusion arrived at, while for the arguments which led to that conclusion only the individual speakers are responsible. And he quotes to this effect a dictum of St. Francis de Sales, that the arguments take place only in the porch, the final decision in the sanctuary.* This dictum appears to me to put a severe strain on the faith of those who receive it. We might accept the pretensions of a professional accountant without dreaming of examining his work. But if we heard him performing his additions by the process, six and four are eleven, and five are thirteen, and seven are twenty-four, how could our belief in him be restored? Who would have the face to say, It is true not a single column in my preliminary calculations is added correctly, but you may rely implicitly that I never fail somehow or another to bring out the correct sum total?

The Nicene Council.—Let me say something now about the history of those first four General Councils, the conclusions arrived at in which we ourselves accept. And first I speak about the Nicene.

Constantine, you may remember, at first tried to silence the Arian disputes as about a subject too trifling to be worthy of serious controversy. If this surprise you, you must remember that Arius was far indeed from teaching that the Saviour was mere man. He may almost be said not to have denied His divinity, since he had no scruple in applying to Him the name God, and in offering Him worship. He owned

* *Temporal Mission of the Holy Ghost*, p. 116.

Him to be 'the Word which was with God from the beginning, and which was God,' the 'Wisdom of the Father' (described in Proverbs viii.), before all creatures, and through whom God made the worlds. His point, however, was, that as any son must be posterior to his father, so the name Son, applied to our Lord, indicated that He was not, like the Father, from all eternity; but that there was—he would not say *a time* when the Son was not, for he owned Him to be anterior to all time—but at least that there *was* when the Son was not. You can conceive then that Constantine, at the time not a baptized Christian, and as a politician anxious above everything for the peace of his Empire, should be impatient of a dispute in which the Christian bishops made themselves angry about, as he thought, mere metaphysical subtleties. When, however, he could not find a hearing for his pacific exhortations, he devised the magnificent plan of assembling all the bishops of Christendom, and obtaining their verdict on the point in dispute. Thus peace would be restored by a decision which no one would be so bold as to resist.

I may anticipate the next branch of our subject, to point out how this history proves that the idea of the infallibility of the Bishop of Rome had not then entered any Eastern person's head. If to consult the Bishop of Rome would have sufficed, his opinion could have been had with little expense or trouble. The history of the next century or two presents a constant succession of councils. A heathen writer complains that the whole posting system of the empire was deranged through its being constantly occupied by bishops hastening to councils.* Why, at so much cost and labour, bring a number of fallible men together, if one infallible man could have

* I refer above to what is said by Ammianus Marcellinus in his estimate of the character of Constantius at the end of Book 21. I quote the passage in full because it illustrates how educated heathen were repelled from Christianity by the spectacle of bitter dissensions among Christians: 'Christianam religionem absolutam et simplicem, anili superstitione confundens; in qua scrutanda perplexius quam componenda gravius, excitavit plurima discidia, quae progressa fusius aluit concertatione verborum; ut catervis antistitum jumentis publicis ultro citroque discurrentibus per synodos, quas appellant, dum ritum omnem ad suum trahere conantur arbitrium, rei

settled the whole question in his closet? From the modern Roman point of view Dr. Newman is right in the difficulty he finds in seeing that the third General Council was at all necessary. See his Essay on Theodoret, *Historical Sketches*, ii. 347–349: 'What could be stronger than a decision at Rome followed by the assent to it of the Catholic world?' He thinks (p. 336) that 'Cyril and Theodoret would have been happier had they kept at home and settled the points in dispute, as they began them, with theological treatises, dispensing with hostile camps, party votings, and coercive acts. Their controversies, I know, were on vital subjects, the settlement of them was essential, and in settling them the Church was infallible; but in matter of fact and after all they were carried on to their irreversible issue by the Pope and the civil power, not by the Council to which they were submitted.' This represents a modern judgment; but in the fourth century a 'decision at Rome' was not sufficient to secure the 'assent to it of the Catholic world.' Constantine had had experience in the Donatist controversy (into the details of which I need not enter at present) that the decision of the Roman bishop would not be accepted as final; for, if it had failed to settle a purely Western dispute, what probability was there that it would be owned as decisive by contending Easterns? Nor can I find any trace that at this stage of the dispute the Pope was consulted at all. Certainly there is no foundation for the assertion of a few of the less scrupulous Romanists, that it was the Pope who summoned the

vehiculariae succideret nervos.' The serious cost of a Synod to the public revenue is further illustrated by the fact that when Pope Liberius was anxious that the charge against Athanasius should be investigated, not in the West, where Constantius was thinking of holding a Council, but at Alexandria, where the alleged offences were said to have occurred; with the view of making his plan more acceptable to the Emperor, he proposed that the bishops should travel to Alexandria, not at the public expense, but each at his own proper cost (Sozom. *H. E.* iv. 11). It seems to me likely that Liberius had the idea that if any such order were made, the bishops would be willing to sign an acquittal of Athanasius without taking the journey. But one thing is clear, that if the Emperor's authority was necessary for a journey to be made by bishops at their own cost and by desire of the Bishop of Rome, it was not possible in those days for the Bishop of Rome to 'gather a General Council together without the commandment and will of Princes.'

Nicene Council.* The bringing it together was entirely the Emperor's idea. The Pope got his summons like other bishops, but being too old and infirm to obey in person, sent two of his presbyters to represent him. This accident made a precedent which his successors followed, as if it were beneath the dignity of the Pope to journey to a Council.

Now, certainly, I have not the least desire to detract from the respect to which the verdict of so venerable a meeting of bishops is entitled. It was such a representative assembly as the world up to that time had never seen. It brought together men from the most remote parts of the world. There were many there who could show in their bodies signs of their sufferings for the Faith; for it was not more than some twenty years since the terrible Diocletian persecution, under which many suffered imprisonment or tortures, who survived to tell at Nicæa what was the faith which they had confessed. And the memory of that Council deserves to be kept in honour for the good service it did in repelling an assault which struck at the very life of our religion. For I verily believe that Christianity would now be extinct if the Arian had been adopted as its authorized form. How many Arians are there now? There are many now who refuse to believe that our Blessed Lord is 'of one substance with the Father'; but I doubt if there are in all the world a score of these who would be willing to hold what amounts to Ditheism, acknowledging our Lord as a kind of inferior divinity, pre-existent before all worlds, but though thus the oldest and highest of creatures, still no more than a creature.

Nor is the respect which we owe that Council liable, as in the case of some later Councils, to deduction on account of turbulence in its proceedings. Our information, indeed, is but scanty. No official acts have been preserved, as they

* The earliest authority I can find for it is nearly four centuries after the event, namely, the sixth General Council in 680 (Mansi, *Concil.*, xi. 661). It is to be noted, however, that though, according to Roman theory, the office of convoking a General Council properly belongs to the Pope, yet a Council otherwise convoked may be recognized as general, provided the Pope have given his consent to the convocation previously, or even afterwards (Bellarmine, *De Conciliis et Ecclesia*, i. 12).

have in the case of later councils; and there is not only no official record, but no authentic report of the proceedings. We do not even know with any certainty who presided over the deliberations. Eusebius, the historian to whom we owe so much of our knowledge of the early Church, was present, and, if he could have known how grateful after ages would have been for it, perhaps might have left us a detailed account of what went on. But he had no reason to be proud of his own share in the proceedings of a Council where his opinion was overruled. Though not an Arian himself, he was not in favour of the measures taken for the exclusion of the Arians; and he presented to the Council for adoption the creed of his own Church, Cæsarea, which was one which the Arians could have signed. So Eusebius in the end found himself obliged to sign a formula drawn up in opposition to his judgment. The consequence was that he did not care to write the history of the Council, and his silence is ill supplemented by other sources. One of the best of these is found in the writings of Athanasius; and I should by no means venture to say that that Father's defence of the truth was untinged by human passion, or that he shows himself likely to have put any very charitable construction on the sayings of one whom he regarded as a dangerous heretic, by all means to be banished from the Church.

One little passage from Athanasius* gives an interesting glimpse how the orthodox found phrase after phrase which they had devised, insufficient to exclude their adversaries. The Arians were overheard consulting with each other, and coming to the conclusion that they could agree to apply to the Son each successively proposed title of honour; being always however ready with a text of Scripture in which the same title is applied to a creature. I will repeat one as a puzzle for you. When it was proposed to predicate eternity of the Son, that too they thought might be conceded, because it is said of ourselves, 'we which are alive are always' —Ἀεὶ γὰρ ἡμεῖς οἱ ζῶντες. Can you tell where these words are to be found?†

* *De decret. Nic. Syn.* c. 21. † 2 Cor. iv. 11.

Another phrase deserves a little more comment. The Arians would own the Son to be God of God. I have said that they had no objection to give Him the title God; and as for the description 'of God,' they said, we are all of God, quoting the text, 'all things are of God.' Now there is an ambiguity about the English preposition 'of,' of which you ought to be aware. When we say 'man was made *of* the dust of the earth,' you cannot mistake the meaning. Now the Son was 'begotten, not made.' But when we say 'begotten *of* the Father,' we are apt to understand the word 'of' in quite a different sense, as equivalent merely to 'by.' In the fourth century it was inquired *of* what was the Son in the other sense of the word, a question which the English language is almost too coarse to state. One does not like to put it in the form, From what materials was the substance of the Son derived? It could not be from any created substance, for it was owned on all hands that the Son was antecedent to all creation. The more thorough-going Arians answered, 'since nothing was before the Son, the Son was of nothing'—ἐξ οὐκ ὄντων—whence they were called Exucontians. The answer embodied in the Creed of the Council was that the Son was *of* the substance of the Father; and in like manner they insisted that the Son was of the same substance with the Father. Leading Arians had already committed themselves to the rejection of this word 'Homoousios,' and by the adoption of it the orthodox found what they were in search of—a test term which would have the effect of excluding Arius and his party from the Church.

Whether or not it was practically wise to be satisfied with nothing which would not bring about this result, even we who live after the event find it hard to answer with certainty. We know all the evils which resulted from the course of action actually adopted: what would have followed from the opposite course it is not so easy to say. Our own experience tells us that theological opinions are apt so to shade off into one another, that it is difficult to put out of communion even men whose opinions seem to us clearly outside the permissible limits, without wounding the sympathies of others

whom we have no desire to disturb or offend. It was so in this Arian controversy. There were a number of thoroughly orthodox men who took deep offence at a non-scriptural word being made essential to communion. There was a further objection to this word that it had been disapproved of at the Council of Antioch, in 264, which condemned Paul of Samosata. Paul had argued that the Father and Son being of the same substance, this common substance must be looked on as a third thing antecedent to both Father and Son; and the orthodox then were content to allow this reason against the use of the word to prevail. The advocates for the doctrine of Development appeal to this instance of a word, condemned at a Council of great weight, being afterwards approved at a still greater Council; but it is absurd to treat as a case of development of doctrine what is really only an example of change as to the use of a word. We need no special theory to explain the fact that the Church, while retaining the same doctrine, may vary the language in which she propounds it, according as words, limited to no special sense by Scripture, come in the course of time to be differently understood.

What I have said as to there being a number of men, themselves quite orthodox, who disapproved of the measures taken to exclude Arius, may in part account for the unexpected vicissitudes of the Arian controversy. Arius had less than a score of bishops to take his side at Nicæa; and we might imagine that after he had been condemned by an assembly of bishops, unprecedented in numbers and weight of dignity, and after the Emperor had backed with all his might the decrees of the Council, treating Arius as no better than a heathen, and condescending even to comments on his personal appearance—it might have been expected, I say, that the heresy would be completely suppressed. Quite the contrary proved to be the case. It is difficult to imagine that if Alexandria had been presided over by the most latitudinarian of bishops, who should have permitted Arius to propagate his doctrines with the utmost impunity, they would ever have won so many converts, or gained such influence in the Christian world, as were obtained after so formal a con-

demnation. The Church's history for the next fifty years presents a spectacle of convulsive struggling, with alternate success: Council after Council meeting; one of about twice the numbers of the Nicene setting aside its decisions; Athanasius sometimes in exile, sometimes flying for his life; Arianism become the creed of the whole nation of the Goths. A little before the meeting of the second General Council, when Gregory Nazianzen came to Constantinople as a kind of apostle of orthodoxy, it was with difficulty he could find a single church in which to deliver his sermons.

The interest of the subject has led me to say more about the Nicene Council than is strictly relevant to the controversy with Roman Catholics, which is this Term's work; but the point I want to bring out is this: If any Council can claim infallible authority it is the Nicene. Rather more than a century after its date the Council of Chalcedon declared, 'We will neither allow ourselves nor others to transgress by a syllable what our fathers at Nicæa have resolved; remembering the command, "remove not the landmarks which thy fathers have placed," for it was not they that spake there, but the Spirit of God Himself.' A like position of honour was conceded, when time had made them venerable, to all the first four General Councils. The Emperor Justinian decreed that the decisions of these four Councils should have the force of laws, adding, 'we receive the dogmas of these four Synods as the sacred Scriptures.' Pope Gregory the Great says that he venerates these four as the four Gospels, and describes them as the four-square stone on which the structure of faith rests.* Yet the hard struggle each of these Councils had to make, and the number of years which the struggle lasted before its decrees obtained general acceptance, show that they obtained their authority because of the truth which they

* 'Sicut sancti Evangelii quatuor libros, sic quatuor Concilia suscipere et venerari me fateor . . . . quia in his velut in quadrato lapide, sancta fidei structura consurgit' (*Epist.* i. 25, *ad Johan. Episc. Const.*). Gregory's words, quoted in the text, have suggested to a much respected writer an unwarranted inference, 'Gregory evidently considering these four as far more important than *those* which followed them.' I must therefore note that Gregory goes on to say, 'Quintum quoque concilium pariter veneror.' The sixth General Council did not take place till after his death.

declared, and it was not because of their authority that the decrees were recognized as true.

Euclid is recognized as an authority because all the propositions which he enunciates are true, and are capable of being proved; and it is not that he was recognized as infallible, and that it was thence inferred that his propositions were true. If anyone should hereafter put forward a theory that in matters of science there is always an infallible guide; that at one time it was Euclid, a couple of hundred years ago it was Sir Isaac Newton, while in our age it was Mr. Darwin; no evidence that our age knew nothing of such a doctrine would be needed beyond the fact that Mr. Darwin's theories, even supposing they afterwards come to be universally received, did not gain their acceptance until after long years of controversy. The way to see whether anyone is recognized as a judge is to observe how parties behave after the judge speaks. If they go on disputing the same as before, it is plain enough that his authority is not acknowledged. And so the fact that we ourselves believe the doctrine of Nicæa to be true does not set aside the fact that general acknowledgment of its truth was not obtained until after hot and violent controversies, which lasted longer than the average lifetime of a man.

And so it was no point of faith in the early Church to receive these Councils as infallible. The deniers of their dogmas were met by tendering to them the proof, which is the proper evidence of them. Thus Augustine, in a well-known passage, reasoning with Maximinus the Arian, when the authority of the Council of Nicæa had been cited for the Homoousion, and that of Ariminum against it, says, 'I must not press the authority of Nicæa against you, nor you that of Ariminum against me; I do not acknowledge the one, as you do not the other; but let us come to ground that is common to both—the testimony of the Holy Scriptures.'* It would thus appear

* 'Sed nunc nec ego Nicaenum, nec tu debes Ariminense, tanquam praejudicaturus, proferre concilium. Nec ego hujus auctoritate, nec tu illius detineris. Scripturarum auctoritatibus, non quorumque propriis, sed utrisque communibus testibus, res cum re, causa cum causa, ratio cum ratione concertet' (August. *Cont. Maximin. Arian.* ii. 14, vol. viii. 704).

that it was not a point of faith to acknowledge the infallibility of Councils, as it is to acknowledge the authority of Scripture; but that the decisions of the Councils were received because they could be proved from Scripture.

On these grounds our own Church is commonly said to have received the first four Councils. Thus, Jeremy Taylor says (*Dissuasive*, Part II., Book i., § i. 4), 'The Church of England receives the four first generals as of the highest regard, not that they are infallible, but that they have determined wisely and holily.' But this reception by the Church of England is only to be understood with reference to the language constantly used by her divines,* and has not been expressed in any authoritative document. The only formal acknowledgment of these Councils that I know of is in a statute passed in the first year of Elizabeth, in which the power to try for heresy is limited to what has been adjudged to be heresy by the authority of canonical Scriptures, or by some of the first four General Councils, or by any other General Council wherein the same was declared heresy by the express and plain words of the said canonical Scriptures, or such as shall hereafter be determined to be heresy by the High Court of Parliament, with the assent of the clergy in their convocation (Eliz., cap. 1, sec. 36, A.D. 1558). Incidentally the authority of the first four General Councils is appealed to in the Homily 'on Fasting'; and again in one of the canons passed by the Convocation of 1640, in which Socinianism is described as being 'a complication of many ancient heresies condemned by the first four General Councils.' All this, however, comes very far short of any formal acknowledgment of the authority of these Councils, and only shows that the doctrine taught by them is accepted by us as true. We accept the doctrines on their own evidence, and are no more concerned with any impeachment of the wisdom or piety of the Fathers

* Several of them extend the acknowledgment to the first six Councils, *e.g.* Field, *of the Church*, v. 51; Hammond, *of Heresy*, iii. 7–11. In the second part of the Homily on 'Peril of Idolatry,' mention is made of pictures placed by Pope Constantine in St. Peter's at Rome of 'the ancient Fathers which had been at those six Councils which were allowed and received of all men.'

who made the decrees, than the value we attach to Magna Charta would be affected by any evidence that might be produced of turbulence, greediness, or self-seeking on the part of the barons who gained it.

The Council of Constantinople.—From the first General Council I pass to the second—that of Constantinople—which indeed may be said to have only become an Ecumenical Council *ex post facto.* Originally it was but an assembly of Eastern bishops. Rome was not represented there. Nor does it seem for seventy years after its occurrence to have enjoyed the consideration of such a Council. It was the respect with which its acts were quoted at Chalcedon, in 451, which seems first to have given it that character. The history of every one of the Councils tends to support the theory that infallibility, if it exist at all, resides in the Church diffusive, not in a Council. Every one of the Councils has had to struggle for its reception. When its decrees are new they have but disputed authority. When time has mellowed them, and when the results arrived at by the Council have been long accepted by the Church, then we first hear of the Council's infallibility. On this Council of Constantinople some light is thrown by a venerable Father who was present, and who has as good a right to the title saint as many who have been honoured with it, Gregory Nazianzen. Indeed I believe he is almost the only Father who is not accused of having sometimes in his writings fallen into doctrinal error. You will all be familiar with that saying of his, quoted by Browne in his *Commentary on the Articles*, 'If I must write the truth, I am disposed to avoid every assembly of bishops; for of no synod have I seen a profitable end, but rather an addition to than a diminution of evils; for the love of strife and the thirst for superiority are beyond the power of words to express.'* But it may be no harm to remind you what good cause Gregory had had for expressing himself so energetically.

Constantinople had been for some time in the hands of Arians; and Gregory, who had come there as a kind of

* *Epist.* 130, Procopio, vol. ii. p. 110: Caillau.

missionary in the cause of orthodoxy, had by his eloquence and exertions raised the orthodox side from almost extinction to pre-eminence. In return for such services Gregory was rewarded with the Episcopate of Constantinople, though not without much reluctance on his own part; for having lived an ascetic and retired life, he had much distaste for the pomp and luxury that surrounded the bishop of the metropolis, while he felt more acutely the worries incident to the office than a man might have done who had lived more in the world. You probably know that there was at this time a schism in the Church of Antioch, into the history of the origin of which I need not enter. Suffice it to say, that on the one hand Meletius was owned as bishop by the great bulk of the Christians of Antioch, and was generally accepted as such through the East: on the other hand, Paulinus had a comparatively small following in Antioch itself, but was strong in external support; for having been recognized by Athanasius, he was acknowledged as bishop of Antioch in the West. In an earlier stage of the dispute the schism had consisted in a refusal of the orthodox to acknowledge a prelate whom they regarded as Arian. But there was now no difference of doctrine between the contending parties. Meletius had disappointed the expectations of those who thought he would have taught Arianism, and had proved to be a staunch adherent to the Nicene Creed. In character he was saintly, in disposition mild and conciliatory; but overtures which he made to Paulinus for a termination of the schism were sternly rejected, it being thought an inexcusable blot that Meletius had owed his election to Arian support.

It is worthy of attention that the party in this dispute which gained the support of the Roman bishops was in the end not successful, and that Meletius, though not acknowledged by Rome in his lifetime, has since been honoured by her as a saint. The fact that Meletius presided over the second General Council is on this account remarkable. In other cases Romanist advocates have asserted, often without the least evidence, that the bishops who actually presided

did so as deputed by the bishop of Rome. In this case the president of a Council, which has since been accepted as Ecumenical, was one whom Rome did not recognize as bishop; yet the Council willingly put him at their head.

Meletius died during the sitting of the Council. The controversy having been merely personal, and there being no disagreement in doctrine, wise and moderate men on both sides had wished that, on the death of either, no successor should be elected, and that the survivor should hold the see without dispute. It is even said—but the thing has been denied—that some compact of the kind had been assented to by leading presbyters at Antioch, including him who was afterwards chosen as Meletius's successor. At all events, when the death of Meletius took place, Gregory desired that the schism should be healed by all recognizing Paulinus as bishop. He held that the Church ought not to be divided on a merely personal question, and that if the controversy had been about two angels, it would not be worth the scandal it caused. Gregory's reputation and influence had extended to the West: the celebrated Jerome sat at his feet as his disciple. Consequently the need of conciliating the West was felt, and was pressed strongly by Gregory. But these counsels were unacceptable to the greater part of the assembly, who were jealous in maintaining their independence against Western attempts at domination. The sun, they said, went from the East to the West, and not from the West to the East. They saw no reason why they should yield to a small and insolent minority at Antioch. Gregory tells us that a yell, rather than a cry, broke from the assembled Episcopate. In verses in which, after he got home, he gave vent to his feelings, he says that they buzzed about him like a swarm of wasps; that they cawed against him as an army of jackdaws.* Then on the arrival at Constantinople of a detach-

* οἱ δ' ἔκρωζον ἄλλος ἄλλοθεν
Δῆμος κολοιῶν εἰς ἓν ἐσκευασμένος
ἢ σφηκῶν δίκην
Ἄττουσιν εὐθὺ τῶν προσώπων ἀθρόως.
—*De Vita sua*, 1680.

ment of bishops, who had other reasons for being unfriendly to Gregory, the assault was turned against himself. The bishops in question came from Egypt; and in order to understand the history of the Eastern Church for centuries after the adoption of Constantine's new capital, you must bear in mind the bitter jealousy that raged between Alexandria and Constantinople. The Bishop of Alexandria had hitherto ranked as the second bishop in Christendom; and he saw with disgust the rivalry of the upstart Byzantium. In the present case the election of Gregory had foiled an attempt of the Alexandrian bishop to thrust into the see of Constantinople a nominee of his own. Consequently Gregory must be got rid of. The point was raised, that as he had been originally consecrated to another see, his translation to Constantinople was a violation of the ancient canons. Gregory, though indignant that an obsolete canon should be invoked against him, professed himself much delighted to return to his retirement, and willing to be thrown overboard, like Jonah, if it would give peace to the Church. We need not doubt his sincerity. A man who undertakes uncongenial work may cheerfully continue at it as long as he feels he is doing it successfully, but be glad to retire when it is perceived that he has been a failure. Yet when Gregory was taken at his word, there remained on his mind, as was not unnatural, the greatest soreness at his treatment; and he has left both in prose, and still more in the verses in which he was fond of giving vent to his feelings, descriptions which show that the one hundred and fifty venerable fathers of Constantinople looked much less venerable when seen close at hand than at a distance.

He begins his verses by saying: 'You may boldly face a lion; a leopard is a gentle beast after all; a snake may frighten you and yet flee from you: there is just one animal to be dreaded—a bad bishop.' The context of the verses themselves, and the occasion on which they were written, leave no reasonable room for doubt that the bad bishops whom he proceeds to describe, were those who formed the majority of the Council, and from whom he had personally

suffered. It seems to me likely that in the coarse, illiterate men whom he describes, he had especially in view the Egyptian contingent; for, as we shall presently see, there is abundant evidence of the rude and unchristian violence with which theological controversy was carried on in that part of the world. It has been suggested that Gregory had only Arian bishops in view; but he brings no charge of false doctrine against the objects of his invective: if he counts them unfit for their office, it is because of their want of education, and still more on account of their low morality. They seem to him to have arrived at their dignity in answer to the call of a herald who had summoned all the gluttons, villains, liars, false swearers, of the empire;* 'they are "chameleons that change their colour with every stone over which they pass;" "illiterate, lowborn, filled with all the pride of upstarts, fresh from the tables of false accountants," "peasants from the plough," "unwashed blacksmiths," "deserters from the army or navy, still stinking from the holds of the ships."† But it may be said the Apostles were unlearned. True; and give me a real apostle and I will reverence him however illiterate; but these are time-servers, waiting not on God, but on the rise and flow of the tide, or the straw on the wind; angry lions to the small, fawning spaniels to the great; flatterers of ladies; snuffing up the smell of good dinners; ever at the gates, not of the wise, but of the powerful; unable to speak themselves, but having sufficient sense to stop the

* ὡς δοκέω μοι
Κήρυκος βοάωντος ἐνὶ μεσάτοισιν ἀκούειν·
Δεῦρ' ἴθ' ὅσοι κακίης ἐπιβήτορες, αἴσχεα φωτῶν,
Γάστορες, εὐρυτένοντες, ἀναιδέες, ὀφρυοέντες,
Ζωροπόται, πλάγκται, φιλοκέρτομοι, ἀβροχίτωνες
Ψεῦσται θ', ὑβρισταί τε θοῶς ἐπίορκον ὀμοῦντες, κ. τ. λ.
—*Ad. Episc.* 74.

In the text I make use of the form in which Dean Stanley (*Christian Institutions*, p. 312) has compressed Gregory's diffuse invectives. The two poems, *De Episcopis* and *Ad Episcopos*, occupy some sixty folio pages in Caillau's edition.

† οἱ δ' ἐξ ἀρότρων, ἡλίῳ κεκαυμένοι
οἱ δ' ἐκ δικέλλης, καὶ σμινύης πανημέρου.
ἄλλοι δὲ κώπην ἢ στρατὸν λελοιπότες
ἄντλον πνέοντες ἢ τὸ σῶμ' ἐστιγμένοι.

mouths of those who can; made wild by their elevation; affecting manners not their own; the long beard, the downcast look, the head bowed, the subdued voice, the slow walk, the got-up devotee; the wisdom anywhere but in the mind.

'Councils, congresses, we greet afar off, from which (to use moderate terms) we have suffered many evils. I will not sit in one of these Councils of geese and cranes; I fly from every meeting of bishops; for I never saw a good end of any such, nor termination, but rather an addition of evils.'

> Οὐδὲ τί που συνόδοισιν ὁμόθρονος ἔσσομ' ἔγωγε
> Χηνῶν ἢ γεράνων ἄκριτα μαρναμένων.
> Ἔνθ' ἔρις, ἔνθα μόθος τε καὶ αἴσχεα κρυπτὰ πάροιθεν
> Εἰς ἕνα δυσμενέων χῶρον ἀγειρόμενα.
>
> —*Adv. fals. Episc.* 92.

But I find that I had better reserve to another Lecture the rest of what I have to say about Councils.

XVII.

GENERAL COUNCILS.

Part II.

IF I had contented myself, as logically I might, with one proof of the comparative novelty of the doctrine of the Infallibility of General Councils, I need not have gone lower down than the history of the first Ecumenical Council, that of Nicæa. According to modern ideas, its decision ought to have put an end to all controversy. We all approve of that decision as correct. It was arrived at by an overwhelming majority of a fairly representative assembly of the bishops of Christendom. It expressed the sentiments of the Bishop of Rome, and was endorsed by the civil authority. Yet to the eye of a Romanist the history of the Church for the rest of the fourth century presents a scene of awful confusion; Council after Council meeting to try to settle the already settled question, throwing the Nicene Creed overboard, and attempting to improve on it. What ailed them, not to acquiesce in conclusions adopted by infallible authority? Simply that, at the time, there was no suspicion of its infallibility. There was no idea then but that what one Council had done another Council might improve on.

Cardinal Newman (*Historical Sketches*, iii. 352) describes the fourth-century Councils, to which I have just referred, as 'a scandal to the Christian name;' and he goes on to say:— 'The Councils of the next century, even such as were orthodox, took their tone and temper from those which had gone before them; and even those which were Ecumenical have nothing to boast of as regards the mass of the Fathers,

taken individually, who composed them.' It is of these Ecumenical Councils of the fifth century I come now to speak.

We must be on our guard against the temptation to which party feeling exposes men, whether in religious or political disputes, namely, reluctance to express disapprobation of any men or any means that have helped to bring about the triumph of the right side. I feel very strongly that the side which triumphed, both at the third and at the fourth Ecumenical Council, was the right side. We of the present day are not concerned with the merely personal question, whether Nestorius was misrepresented; or whether he only expressed himself incautiously, without himself holding what we call Nestorianism. But we can heartily join in condemning that Nestorianism as being practically equivalent to a denial of our Lord's Divinity. Breaking up our Lord's Personality into two is a scheme which enables a man to use the loftiest language concerning the Divinity which dwelt in Jesus, while at the same time holding Jesus Himself to be a man imperfect morally as well as intellectually. If we hold that the Deity did but dwell in Jesus without being truly and properly one with him, this is to ascribe to him no exclusive prerogative. Might not the Deity thus dwell with many men? You will find that one would be able to affirm, in the same words, concerning the founder of Buddhism, everything that, according to the Nestorian hypothesis, you can affirm as to the Divinity of the Founder of the Christian religion. And if I have no sympathy with Nestorianism, neither have I any with the heresy condemned at the fourth General Council, which practically is equivalent to a denial that our Saviour was truly and properly man. But without having sympathy with either heresy, we are still free to inquire whether we can approve of the measures taken to suppress it, and whether these measures were, in point of fact, successful.

Now, when we come down from the second General Council to the third and fourth, our documentary means of knowledge increase, but not so our respect for Councils. More and more I find myself forced to say, that if I believe

the conclusions at which these meetings arrived to be true, it is not because the Councils have affirmed them; and, as far as I can judge, it is not on that account that the Universal Church has believed them either. The more I study these Nestorian and Eutychian disputes, the less sympathy can I feel with either party to the struggle. On both sides the virulence of party rancour seems utterly to have killed Christian charity. The problem on which the disputants were engaged—namely, to explain how the divine and human natures could be united in one person, and to state the conditions of such a union—is as difficult as any with which the human intellect has ever grappled, and is therefore one on which error surely might deserve indulgent consideration. Yet both parties regarded those who differed from themselves—and that possibly only in their use of language—as wilful deniers of the truth, enemies of Christ, haters of God, men for whom no punishment could be too severe in this world and in the next. And the reputation of Christianity has suffered, as secular historians have pointed out that these furious struggles took place at a time when the Roman Empire was threatened with dissolution under the inroads of barbaric tribes, who could not be successfully resisted if Christians would not give over fighting with one another.

Cyril of Alexandria, who presided over the third Council—that of Ephesus—is perhaps, of all those who have been honoured with the title of saint, the one whose character least commands our affection. In the fourth century the title ἅγιος, applied to an orthodox bishop, meant, perhaps, little more than the title 'reverend' applied to a clergyman of the present day. But of the qualities which go to make up our modern idea of saintliness, the only one to which Cyril can lay claim is zeal for orthodoxy. Of the non-theological virtues of meekness, kindness, equity, obedience to law, we find in him no trace. There was no country where religious controversies were carried on with such violence as in Egypt. Cyril had been brought up in a bad school; and he handed down to his successor the traditions of that school with extensive evil developments. His whole career

was marked by violence and bloodshed. He signalized the commencement of his episcopate by an assault on the Novatians, whose churches he shut up, seizing their sacred vessels, and depriving their bishop of all his property.* He followed this up by an attack on the Jews—not without provocation on their part. A leading member of his congregation had been punished by the magistrate on a charge brought against him by Jews. Cyril sent for the chief rabbis, and severely threatened them if such molestations were repeated. Riots followed; and tidings were brought to Cyril one morning that during the night a concerted attack had been made by Jews upon Christians, in which several of the latter had lost their lives. Cyril forthwith took vengeance into his own hands, deciding that there was not room for Jews and Christians in the same city. He put himself at the head of an immense mob, which took possession of the synagogues, plundered the goods of the Jews, and turned them out of the city. These proceedings naturally brought him into collision with the civil authorities, and the relations between the bishop and the prefect became extremely strained. Five hundred Nitrian monks poured down to Alexandria to give substantial support to the cause of the affronted patriarch. They surrounded the prefect's chariot, drove his guards away with showers of stones, and not content with abusive language, one of them, Ammonius by name, struck him with a stone, and covered his face with blood. But the people rose in defence of their magistrate, overpowered the monks, and seizing Ammonius, carried him off to punishment, which, according to the barbarous usage of the time, was so severe that he died under it. Then Cyril set the evil example of canonizing criminals as martyrs. Though there is no reason to suppose that the assault on the prefect was due to direct instigation of his, he made himself an accessory to it after the fact by giving Ammonius a public funeral, bestowing on him the title 'Admirable;' and would have even enrolled him for permanent commemoration as a martyr had not the

* Socrates, *H. E.* vii., 7, 13–15.

disapprobation of moderate men warned him to drop the design.*

But a worse tragedy followed. The belief in Church circles was that the governor would have been on better terms with the bishop if he had not been too intimate with heathens. Prominent among his heathen friends was the celebrated Hypatia, who, in a licentious age, when public life was less open to women than now, exercised the functions of a lecturer in philosophy with such dignified modesty as to command universal respect. One Peter, who held the office of reader in the principal church, collected a band of zealots like-minded with himself, who watched for Hypatia returning from her school, tore her from her chariot, dragged her into a church, and there murdered her with every circumstance of brutal atrocity. It is not to be supposed that this deed had Cyril's sanction; but if a party leader tolerates and profits by the excesses of violent followers up to a certain point, he cannot escape responsibility if they proceed beyond the point where he would have preferred them to stop. If the maxim '*noscitur e sociis*' is ever to have applicability, a Christian teacher must be judged of by the spirit manifested by those who have been the most zealous hearers of his instructions.

For excesses of zeal in his warfare against heretics, or Jews, or heathen, Cyril has not wanted apologists† who willingly believe that the case against him has been coloured by witnesses too ready to sympathize with enemies of the Church. But there is one chapter in his history with regard to which his line of conduct now finds no defender. I refer to his treatment of a greater saint than himself, St. Chrysostom. I have already said that in reading the Church history of the centuries following the erection of Constantinople into

* I have no wish to exaggerate the case against Cyril, and I will therefore suggest an excuse for his conduct, which I have not seen put forward by any of his apologists. My idea is that the prefect, suspecting that the attack on him had been organized by a higher person than those who took part in it, endeavoured, according to the legal usage of the time, to extract the truth from his prisoner by torture, and that Cyril's admiration and gratitude were moved by the constancy with which Ammonius endured, even to death, without uttering a criminatory word.

† One of the latest is Kopallik, *Cyrillus von Alexandria*, 1881.

a capital, we must constantly bear in mind the jealousy felt at Alexandria at the encroachments on the dignity of their ancient see by this upstart rival. I have told how Gregory Nazianzen was compelled, by Egyptian opposition, to resign his see. St. Chrysostom's election to the bishopric of Constantinople disappointed an attempt of the Alexandrian patriarch, Theophilus, to place in Constantinople a nominee of his own. From that time Chrysostom had in Theophilus a bitter enemy, through whose exertions he suffered deposition and exile, accompanied with treatment which hastened his death. Cyril, the nephew of Theophilus, was his aider and abettor in the warfare against Chrysostom; and he continued his hostility when, on his uncle's death, he succeeded to the see. The death of Chrysostom did not soften his feelings; and a few years afterwards, when entreated to allow Chrysostom's name to be placed on the diptychs, he replied that this would be as great an affront to the orthodox bishops on the list as it would be to the Apostles if the traitor Judas were reckoned in their number. It was not until ten years after Chrysostom's death that he reluctantly gave way. Now what, in Roman Catholic eyes, makes this conduct inexcusable is that Cyril's obstinacy placed him in opposition, not only to Chrysostom, but to the Bishop of Rome, out of whose communion the Egyptians accordingly remained for twelve years.

Accordingly, Cardinal Newman here gives Cyril up. 'Cyril, I know, is a saint; but it does not follow that he was a saint in the year 412.' 'Among the greatest saints are those who, in early life, were committed to very unsaintly doings.' 'We may hold Cyril to be a great servant of God without considering ourselves obliged to defend certain passages of his ecclesiastical career. It does not answer to call whity-brown white. His conduct out of his own territory, as well as in it, is often very much in keeping with the ways of the uncle who preceded him in his see, and his archdeacon who succeeded him in it.' I hope I am not ungrateful for so much candour if I say that if it does not answer to call

whity-brown white, neither does it answer to call black whity-brown. Dr. Newman himself asks the question, '*Is* Cyril a saint? How *can* he be a saint if what has been said above is matter of historical truth?' His chief reason for giving a favourable answer is one that has not much weight with us. 'Catholics must believe that Providence would have interposed to prevent his receiving the honours of a saint, in East and West, unless he really was deserving of them.' 'It is natural to think that Cyril would not have been divinely ordained for so prominent an office in the establishment of dogmatic truth unless there were in him moral endowments which the surface of history does not reveal to us.' And he suggests, that as we hear very little of Cyril during the last few years of his life, it may charitably be believed that he had repented of his early violence; and he thinks that as 'he had faith, firmness, intrepidity, fortitude, endurance, these virtues, together with contrition for his failings, were efficacious in blotting out their guilt, and saving him from their penal consequences.'

Now I am sure you will understand that if I pronounce a man to be undeserving of the title of Saint, I do not mean to deny that he may have repented of his sins, and have entered the kingdom of Heaven. In giving honours to historical characters we can only be guided by those 'moral endowments which the surface of history *does* reveal;' and I count it to involve a degradingly low estimate of the Christian character if we hold up as a model of saintly perfection one in whom history only enables us to discover the excellencies and failings of an able and successful, but violent and unscrupulous, party leader. If Cyril changed his character towards the end of his life, his contemporaries do not seem to have been aware of it. Here is the language of one of them on hearing the news of his death: 'At last the reproach of Israel is taken away. He is gone to vex the inhabitants of the world below with his endless dogmatism. Let everyone throw a stone on his grave, lest perchance he may make even hell too hot to hold him, and return to earth.' 'The East and Egypt are

henceforth united: envy is dead, and heresy is buried with her.'*

I have spoken at such length about the character of Cyril, because in truth Cyril *was* the third General Council. You will not expect me to enter into the history of the Nestorian controversy, or to discuss whether Nestorius really deserved condemnation, or whether by mutual explanations he might not have been reconciled to the Church without a schism. He is a man for whom I have no great sympathy; but in those days the views of the bishop of Constantinople were not likely to meet with indulgent criticism from the bishop of Alexandria. If I were to say that Cyril at Ephesus was 'seeking to revenge a private quarrel rather than to promote the interests of Jesus Christ,' I should say no more than was said by good and impartial men at the time.† 'Cyril,' says Newman, 'came to Ephesus not to argue but to pronounce an anathema, and to get over the necessary process with as much despatch as possible.' 'He had not much tenderness for the scruples of literary men, for the rights of Councils, or for episcopal minorities' (pp. 349, 350).

* The letter from which these passages are taken (*Theodoret*, Ep. 180) was read as Theodoret's at the fifth General Council (fifth Session), and there accepted as his. But on questions of this kind Councils are not infallible; and the letter contains a note of spuriousness in purporting to be addressed to John, bishop of Antioch, who died before Cyril. I own that the suggestion that for 'John' we ought to read 'Domnus' does not suffice to remove suspicion from my mind. But it is solely for the reason just stated that I feel no confidence in accepting the letter as Theodoret's. Newman's opinion that it is incredible Theodoret could have written so 'atrocious' a letter is one which it is amazing should be held by anyone familiar with the controversial amenities of the time. Our modern urbanity is willing to bury party animosities in the grave; but in the fifth century Swift's translation would be thought the only proper one of the maxim 'De mortuis nil nisi bonum'—'when scoundrels die let all bemoan 'em.' Certainly the man who half a dozen years after Chrysostom's death spoke of him as Judas Iscariot had no right to expect to be politely treated after his own death by one whom he had relentlessly persecuted.

† St. Isidore of Pelusium found himself constrained to write to Cyril in terms of strong remonstrance (see *Epp.* I., 310, 323, 324, 370). He says that if he were, as Cyril called him, his father, he feared the penalty incurred by Eli for not rebuking his children. If he were, as he himself deemed, Cyril's son, he feared the example of Jonathan, who shared his father's fate because he had not prevented his consultation of the Witch of Endor. He begged him therefore not, in avenging a private quarrel, to bring in perpetual dissension into the Church. Affection, no doubt, does not see

In short, nothing could have been more violent and unfair than the proceedings at Ephesus. Nestorius may have deserved condemnation; but it is certain that he got no fair trial, and that the proceedings against him would have been pronounced null and void by any English Court of Appeal. In fact the Council was opened in the teeth of a protest made by sixty-eight bishops, because the bishop of Antioch and the bishops of the East were known to be within three days' march of Ephesus. But because these bishops were known to be likely to vote the wrong way, they were not waited for. The Council did its work in one summer's day; deposed Nestorius in his absence, and acquainted him with the fact in a letter addressed to Nestorius 'the new Judas.' In a few days the bishop of Antioch arrived, and then the other party held what they professed to be the real Council, and deposed Cyril.

There has been a question by what kind of majority must the acts of a Council be carried in order to entitle them to bind the Church: a simple majority? or two-thirds? or more? and ought we to count heads or to take the votes by nations or in some other way? Obviously, if we count heads, the provinces close to the place at which the Council is held are likely to have a disproportionately large share of the representation. At the Council of Ephesus great complaints were made by the Nestorian party that Cyril had taken an unfair advantage over them; that the Emperor had directed only a certain number of bishops to be brought from each province, and that he had brought a great many more from Egypt than he had a right to bring. Ephesus, too, which was on Cyril's side, was, as was natural, largely over-repre-

clearly, but hatred cannot see at all. Cyril was much blamed by many at Ephesus for pursuing his private enmity as he did. They said, He is the nephew of Theophilus, and exhibits the same character, persecuting Nestorius as he did Chrysostom, though no doubt there was a good deal of difference between the two men. *προσπάθεια μὲν οὐκ ὀξυδορκεῖ, ἀντιπάθεια δὲ ὅλως οὐχ ὁρᾷ . . . Πολλοί γὰρ σε κωμῳδοῦσι τῶν συνειλεγμένων εἰς Ἔφεσον, ὡς οἰκείαν ἀμυνόμενον ἔχθραν, ἀλλ' οὐ τὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ ὀρθοδόξως ζητοῦντα. Ἀδελφιδοῦς ἐστι, φασί, Θεοφίλου, μιμούμενος ἐκείνου τὴν γνώμην. Ὥσπερ γὰρ ἐκεῖνος μανίαν σαφῆ κατεσκέδασε τοῦ θεοφόρου καὶ θεοφιλοῦς Ἰωάννου, οὕτως ἐπιθυμεῖ καυχήσασθαι καὶ οὗτος, εἰ καὶ πολὺ τῶν κρινομένων ἐστὶ τὸ διάφορον.*

sented. In modern times these difficulties have been avoided by requiring that the decrees of Councils shall be practically unanimous. Pius IV. boasted of the unity obtained at Trent as plainly 'the Lord's doing and marvellous in our eyes.' The unity, to be sure, was brought about by having the questions submitted to a preliminary discussion in committees or congregations; those who there found themselves in a minority keeping their opposition silent when the question was submitted formally to the Council itself. And so was it done at the Vatican Council the other day. Unanimity was thought so essential to the validity of a Council's acts that the anti-infallibilist bishops had not courage for such a breach of discipline or decorum as to say 'non placet' when the matter came formally to a vote, and with one or two exceptions all ran away from Rome before the day of the final vote.

Very different was the state of things at Ephesus. To quote Dr. Newman, 'At Ephesus the question in dispute was settled and defined before certain constituent portions of the episcopal body had made their appearance, and this with a protest of sixty-eight of the bishops then present, against eighty-two. When the remaining forty-three arrived, these did more than protest against the definition that had been carried. They actually anathematized the Fathers who had carried it, whose number seems to have stood altogether at one hundred and twenty-four against one hundred and eleven, and in this state of disunion the Council ended. How then was its definition valid? By after events, which I suppose must be considered complements and integral portions of the Council.'*

If this be so, the infallibility clearly rested not with the Council, but with the after events, which reviewed and chose between its contradictory utterances. But what were the after events thus vaguely described? Bribery and intimidation at the imperial Court. The scene was soon transferred from Ephesus to Constantinople; and if the deposition of Nestorius had more effect in the end than the deposition of

* Letter to Duke of Norfolk, p. 100.

Cyril by the rival section of the Council, the result was due not to the venerable authority of the Council, but to the effect produced by the turbulent monks of Constantinople on the nerves of the emperor, who was one of the weakest of men, and to εὐλογίαι, or, in plain English, bribes judiciously administered to his favourites. At an early stage of the controversy Nestorius complained that Cyril was shooting against him with golden arrows; and when the final decision was arrived at, the clergy of Alexandria mourned at the impoverishment of their Church, which, in addition to sending large sums to Constantinople, had gone in debt 1500 pounds of gold besides.*

If it was not a Council which settled the Nestorian controversy, still less was the Eutychian so settled. The Gallicans were quite right in saying that the decisions of a Council only prevail in case they are accepted by the Church. The Eutychian question was, as you know, in the first instance decided the wrong way by a Council, the second of Ephesus. It is worthy of remark that at both the Councils of Ephesus the bishop of Alexandria, as the greatest bishop present, presided, the Roman legates having the second place. Romanist

* There has been preserved a letter from the archdeacon of Alexandria to the bishop appointed to succeed Nestorius at Constantinople, complaining of the large sums that had been already sent from Alexandria, and entreating the bishop's influence to obtain some adequate result from this expenditure: 'Scriptum est a Domino meo vestro fratre et Dominae ancillae Dei reverentissimae Pulcheriae et praeposito Paulo et Romano cubiculario et Dominae Marcellae cubiculariae et Dominae Droseriae. *Et directae sunt benedictiones dignae eis.* Et ei qui contra ecclesiam est Chrysoreti praeposito magnificentissimus Aristolaus paratus est scribere de nonnullis quae angelus tuas debeat impetrare. *Et ipsi vero dignae translatae sunt eulogiae.* Scripsit autem Dominus meus sanctissimus frater vester et Domino scholastico et magnificentissimo Arthebae ut ipsi conveniant et persuadeant Chrysoreti tandem desistere ab oppugnatione ecclesiae. *Et ipsis vero benedictiones dignae directae sunt . . .* Subjectus autem brevis ostendit quibus hinc directae sint eulogiae ut et ipse noveris quantum pro tua sanctitate laboret Alexandrina ecclesia quae tanta praestet his qui illic sunt. Clerici enim qui hic sunt contristantur quod ecclesia Alexandrina nudata sit hujus causa turbelae, et debet praeter illa quae hinc transmissa sunt Ammonio Comiti auri libras mille quingentas. Et nunc ei denuo scriptum est ut praestet. Sed de tua ecclesia praesta avaritiae quorum nosti ne Alexandrinam ecclesiam contristent' (*Synodicon* 203, ap. Mansi, *Concilia*, v. 988).

writers reconcile this with modern theories as to Roman supremacy by the gratuitous assertion that Cyril presided at the first Council as the representative of the bishop of Rome;* but this evasion is not open to them in the case of the second Council, the bishops of Rome and Alexandria being on opposite sides; and it is plain that the theory had not yet been heard of in the East which would ascribe the headship of all Councils to the bishop of Rome, present or absent.

I have already remarked to you on the difference between the theological schools of Alexandria and of Antioch, the tendencies of the one being in the direction of mysticism, those of the other in that of rationalism; the one accentuating more strongly our Lord's Divinity, the other His humanity. The confusion that reigned in the Eastern Church for the next two centuries arose from the fact that Alexandria, which triumphed at the third General Council, was defeated at the fourth. Reasons of policy had always inclined Rome to support Alexandria against Constantinople; but at this time it chanced, through a rare contingency, that the see of Rome was held by a theologian capable of forming an opinion of his own on a doctrinal question. Pope Leo's decision turned the scale against Alexandria; and the result was that many of the same men who had been on the winning and orthodox side at the first of these two Councils unexpectedly found themselves on the heretical side at the other; and it was this reverse of fortune more than anything else which prevented Chalcedon from giving peace to the Eastern Church, there being always hope that a similar change of parts might take place again. You can guess what confusion there would be in the Roman Church were the Vatican Council now reassembled, and if the bishops who had spoken against infallibility, and only yielded at the last moment on the former occasion, now played the leading part, and if Cardinal Manning, and the other leading men who had triumphed before, were now cast out as heretics.

* The bishop of Rome duly sent legates, but Cyril was in too great a hurry to wait for them, and Nestorius was deposed before their arrival.

However, the Alexandrians came to the second Council of Ephesus prepared to carry all before them—and so, in fact, they did. It is notorious with what good reason this Council was called the 'Synod of robbers;' but the method of deciding theological questions by physical force, though highly developed on that occasion, did not originate then nor did it come to an end then. In theological violence Alexandria had a bad pre-eminence. What a potentate the bishop there was may be judged from a scene that took place later at Chalcedon. The proceedings there had been very unfavourable to Egypt, the bishop of Alexandria having been deposed; and no doubt it was painful to Egyptian bishops to subscribe the formula adopted by the Council; but the ground alleged for their refusal, and which the Council at length accepted as valid, was, that it would be as much as their lives were worth when they got home if they took any step unsanctioned by the bishop of Alexandria. They threw themselves on the ground, imploring the pity of the members of the Council: 'Have mercy on us; pity our grey hairs; take our sees if you will, but spare our lives; don't send us home to certain death; if we must die let us die here.' The bishop of Alexandria had a sturdy militia zealous to execute his orders. I have told of the descent of monks from the Nitrian monasteries to avenge his slighted authority; but he had defenders closer at hand in the *Parabolani*, a charitable corporation whose duties were concerned with attendance on the sick, and with the burial of the dead, and who were appointed by the bishop and were eager to execute his orders. Possibly the nature of their duties made them heedless of life; but they appear to have been a most violent and turbulent set of men. To their charge has been laid the murder of Hypatia; at all events, we read immediately after that event of complaints made to the emperor, in consequence of which the appointment and control of these men was transferred from the bishop to the civil authorities, though things soon reverted to the old arrangement.

At both Councils of Ephesus the ships that brought the prelates from Alexandria brought also a strong detachment

of the Bishop's bodyguard. At the first Council the sailors of the Egyptian ships were reinforced by a body of stout peasants, whom Cyril's ally, Memnon of Ephesus, brought up from his farms; and bishops of Nestorian leanings had to complain of the intimidation to which they were subjected, not only out of doors but in their houses. At the second Council, besides the parabolani, there came from the borders of Syria and Persia a horde of savage monks, well exercised in putting down Nestorianism by physical force, whose irruption brought the proceedings of the Council to an end in a scene of awful confusion. Even when only the members of the Council were present, the bishops cannot be said to have voted with perfect freedom, when the assertion of two natures in Christ was received with cries of, 'away with him; burn him alive; cut him in two; as he has divided so let him be divided.' In such a temper of the meeting the acquittal of Eutyches was obtained with tolerable unanimity; and if the president, Dioscorus, had been content to stop there, this synod might have passed as not more disorderly than some others. But when he proceeded to move the deposition of the bishop of Constantinople cries of remonstrance were heard. The chief Roman legate expressed dissent in Latin; and his κοντραδικιτούρ has been duly recorded in the proceedings of the Council. Some leading bishops threw themselves at the feet of the throne of Dioscorus, and embracing his knees implored him to be merciful. Then he cried out that violence was being used towards him, and called for the assistance of the civil power. The doors of the Church were opened; soldiers, monks, parabolani, rushed in, and a scene of wild confusion ensued. The bishop of Constantinople was knocked down and trampled on; and the only doubtful point is whether it was not Dioscorus himself who struck the first blow, and who kicked him after he was down. The evidence to that effect might perhaps be enough to produce conviction, if it were not outweighed by the fact that afterwards, at Chalcedon, when no misdeeds of Dioscorus were likely to be passed over in silence, this one was not mentioned. But certain it is that the bishop of Constantinople, within three days, died of the ill-usage he

had received. Meanwhile the other bishops of the minority who tried to escape found the doors of the church again locked. Some tried to hide under the benches; one fled into the sacristy. They were pulled out and told that they must not go till they had subscribed the decision of the Council. But there had not been time to write the proceedings out; and if they were once allowed to go away, it was not likely that their signatures could be had. So before they were let go they were made to subscribe their names to blank sheets, to be filled up afterwards.

An amusing scene took place when these bishops afterwards, at Chalcedon, pleaded that their signatures had been obtained by constraint. Constraint! cried the Eutychians. What a plea for bishops to put forward! Is the spirit of the martyrs so utterly extinct among you? Or are we to suppose that the martyrs might have done what their persecutors demanded, and afterwards pleaded that they had acted under constraint? Nay, was the reply: if we had fallen into the hands of heathen we should have borne anything they could inflict rather than yield. But the case was different when we were ordered by a bishop. A bishop is a father; and a son must obey a father, even though he himself disapprove of the command.

That this meeting, which Leo of Rome justly stigmatized as 'Latrocinium,' is not venerated in the East as one of the great Councils of the Church, is mainly due to the death of the emperor and a change of politics at the Court of Constantinople; and the violence and unfairness rather exceeded in degree than differed in kind from what was exhibited in other Councils more fortunate in their repute. As I have mentioned the acclamations of the bishops at this Council, I ought to tell you that there is a difference between the interruptions permitted by the parliamentary decorum of our time and what was considered permissible in the early Roman Empire. In our time, interruptions at a public meeting are usually inarticulate, clapping of hands, stamping of feet, and so forth. Parliamentary order does not permit a speaker, not in possession of the chair, to go beyond a cry of 'oh, oh,'

'hear, hear,' 'order, order,' or 'question;' but in the Roman Senate it was common for the interrupter to shout out a short sentence, which was duly taken down by the reporters, and regularly entered on the Acts of the Senate. Sometimes a cry raised in this manner was taken up by the whole assembly, which repeated it perhaps several times, and, I believe, in a kind of chant; and then the reporters took carefully down how many times the cry was repeated. If time permitted, I could give you many curious illustrations of this practice,* which certainly did not tend to the orderliness of proceedings; but the acclamations of the assembly came to be looked on as an essential way of expressing the assent of the whole meeting to what was done. In conformity with this practice, the proceedings of all the early Councils, whose doings are recorded in detail, end with acclamations; and the practice was kept up to the latest of them: the Council of Trent, for instance, ends with acclamations, led by the presiding Cardinal, and responded to by the Fathers, in the way of versicle and response, in such manner as could not have worked if the Fathers had not been drilled beforehand or given in print or writing what they were to acclaim. But such acclamations, however harmless at the end of the proceedings, must have been very disturbing in the middle, since it could not be agreeable to a speaker to be interrupted by shouts of 'anathema to the heretic,' 'burn him alive,' 'cut him in two.' At Chalcedon, where the proceedings were comparatively orderly, there were occasional scenes of great uproar. Thus, when the Church historian, Theodoret, whose sympathies had been with

* The Augustan History is full of examples extracted from the official acts of the Senate: see, for instance, the acclamations at the death of Commodus, and those on the election of Alexander Severus, which fill whole chapters in the lives by Ælius Lampridius. When Tacitus pleaded his age as unfitting him for the Empire, the Senate acclaimed:—'Et Trajanus senex ad imperium venit' (dixerunt decies). After acclaiming several similar sentences each ten times, then:—'Imperatorem te non militem facimus' (dixerunt vicies); 'Severus dixit caput imperare non pedes' (dixerunt tricies), &c. At the election of Claudius II. some of the acclamations were repeated sixty times. Another interesting specimen is to be found in the official acts of the election of Eraclius as St. Augustine's successor, one of the acclamations being repeated twenty-five times, another twenty-eight times.

Nestorius, took his place, the Acts of the Council record that:—'The most reverend the bishops of the East shouted out: "He is worthy." The most reverend the bishops of Egypt shouted out: "Don't call him bishop; he is no bishop; turn out the fighter against God; turn out the Jew." The most reverend the bishops of the East shouted out: "The orthodox for the Synod; turn out the rebels; turn out the murderers." The most reverend the bishops of Egypt: "Turn out the enemy of God; turn out the defamer of Christ." It became necessary for the Imperial Commissioners to suppress the clamour.

Succeeding Councils have been less noisy and violent; but this has been because, as a general rule, the parties whom it was intended to condemn have not been allowed to be present, and the Council has only represented one side. I think the Council of Trent will bear advantageous comparison with some of the early Councils. Yet what scenes might we expect to have taken place there if the Protestants had been allowed to be present. We may guess from one little incident related by the Papal historian of the Council, Cardinal Pallavicino. As the Council was breaking up from a debate in committee on the exciting subject of Justification, one bishop took so much offence at something said by another that, as the cardinal tells us, after the manner of men inflamed with anger, he burst into an act of passion more injurious to himself than the original offence; for having laid hands on the beard of his opponent, he pulled out many hairs, and forthwith left the assembly.* Great uproar ensued; but though the Council thought that the offending bishop had received much provocation, they very properly expelled him.

In short, if you take up the Acts of the Councils predisposed to reverence their decisions as conclusions which

* 'L'altro allora, secondo il costume degli appassionati nella collera, precipitò in una vendetta assai più nociva al vendicatore che l'ingiuria vendicata. Imperocchè scagliate le mani alla barba del Chironese ne strappò molti peli, ed immantenente partissi.'—*Storia del Concilio di Trento*, viii. 6.

holy men arrived at after calm and prayerful deliberation, you find, on the contrary, records of turbulent meetings, in which men who exhibited no particle of the spirit of Christianity used every effort to gain a victory over their opponents, and get them turned out of the Church. In such a case, if we accept the conclusions arrived at as correct, it is by no means on the authority of the bodies which affirmed them.

How little, even at the time, was the real influence of a Council is proved by the poor success of the Council of Chalcedon in putting an end to the controversy on account of which it was summoned. No Council had higher external claims on the reverence of Christians. In the number of bishops present (over 600), it exceeded any previous Council. It had all the sanction that could be given it by the bishop of Rome, Leo the Great, whose dogmatic letter it enthusiastically adopted. It was backed by all the efforts of the Emperor Marcian, whose zeal was active in extirpating the heresy which it condemned; yet, after the Council, the Monophysite heresy spread with a new growth; and in respect of the number and zeal of its adherents, I think, surpassed the opposite party. It had frequently its leaders enthroned in all the Patriarchal sees—Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch, Jerusalem. In fact, Egypt never acquiesced in the defeat it sustained at the fourth Council. The creed of Chalcedon was but an exotic in that country. Its adherents were but the 'Court party,' the Melchites. The bishop substituted for the deposed Dioscorus was able, in some sort, to maintain his authority as long as the emperor lived; but when news came of the emperor's death, forthwith they murdered him. The empire incurred so much danger by fighting against Monophysitism, that formulas of reconciliation were drawn up, in which the Council of Chalcedon was thrown completely overboard; and it was attempted to state the doctrine of our Lord's nature in a manner in which all might agree. But no compromise was accepted. The fighting went on until the Mahometans came down, and swept both parties away; and the Monophysites exist, though with

diminished numbers, down to our own day. As I have asked before, By what better criterion can we test whether a judge is recognized as having authority to decide a controversy than by observing how he is listened to when he speaks? If we find that no one assents to his decisions except those who had been of the same opinion before he spoke, we may conclude that he was not owned as having authority to speak; and if the Council of Chalcedon was not entitled to impose its decisions without examination on the Christian world, I do not see how such a claim can be made for any other Council.

I have already referred to discredit thrown on Councils by the badness of the arguments by which their conclusions were arrived at. For instance, at the third General Council, Cyril, who, in his opposition to Nestorius, approached perilously near Apollinarianism, produced 'among the formal testimonies to guide the bishops in their decisions, an extract from a writing of Timotheus the Apollinarian, if not of Apollinaris himself, ascribing this heretical document to Pope Julius, the friend of Athanasius.'* But a more plentiful crop of illustrations may be drawn from the proceedings of the seventh General Council, the second of Nicæa. The Fathers attempted to prove the propriety of image worship from Scripture; but, as if conscious that they would have no easy task, they propounded the then novel doctrine of the insufficiency of Scripture, and anathematized those who say that they will not receive any doctrine on the bare authority of Fathers and Councils, unless it be plainly taught in the Old and New Testament. Their Scripture proofs were not what would be very convincing to us. For instance, the antiquity of looking at images is proved from the Psalms, since David says, 'Show me thy face;' and 'Like as we have heard, so have we seen;' and again, from Canticles, 'Let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice, for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely.' Should we have any hesitation in setting up our fallible judgment against that of those infallible interpreters, and in pronouncing such proofs to be texts wrested from their contexts, we need have

* Newman, *Theodoret*, p. 351.

less scruple about their proofs from antiquity, several of which are from spurious documents which no learned Roman Catholic now would venture to defend. I will read you from Robertson's *Church History* (ii. 156) one famous story, which was such a favourite that it was twice used in the proceedings of the Council: 'An aged monk on the Mount of Olives, it was said, was greatly tempted by a spirit of uncleanness. One day the demon appeared to him, and after having sworn him to secrecy offered to discontinue his assaults if the monk would give up worshipping a picture of the Blessed Virgin and infant Saviour which hung up in his cell. The monk asked time to consider the proposal, and notwithstanding his oath applied for advice to an aged abbot of renowned sanctity, who blamed him for having been so deluded as to swear to the devil; but told him that he had yet done well in laying open the matter, and that it would be better for him to visit every brothel in Jerusalem than to refrain from adoring the Saviour and His Mother in the picture. From this edifying tale a twofold moral was drawn, with general consent: that reverence for images would not only warrant unchastity but breach of oaths, and that those who had sworn to the Iconoclast heresy were free from their obligations.'

The highest point, perhaps, that Councils attained was at the time of the Council of Constance. For two or three centuries the power of the Popes had been steadily growing, until first, by their removal to Avignon and their subjugation to French influence, then by the schism in the Popedom, their authority was greatly weakened. The schism made it necessary that there should be some superior authority to determine who really was Pope: or rather that was not enough, for though Christendom was generally agreed in desiring that the three rival Popes should be replaced by a single Pope, the adherents of each were indisposed to admit that they had been all along in the wrong. What was needed was an authority which, if the Popes should not voluntarily resign, would be able to compel them. In order that all might acquiesce in its decisions it was necessary that it should

have power to depose even a real Pope; for there were some who acknowledged each of the three as the real Pope. This power then the Council of Constance claimed in its celebrated decree, passed without a dissentient voice, 'that every lawfully convoked Ecumenical Council derives its authority immediately from Christ, and that everyone, *the Pope included*, is subject to it in matters of faith, in healing of schism, and the reformation of the Church.' I do not say that this decision placed Councils in a higher position than they were at the time of the Council of Nicæa—for I do not imagine that the Roman prelate would have dreamed then of setting himself above the Council—but it placed them higher than they had been in the times immediately before, or than they were afterwards. For when the Council of Basle attempted to exercise, in the face of a universally acknowledged Pope, the prerogatives which the Council of Constance had claimed in the time of schism, the result was failure; and the appearance of the Greek representatives at the Pope's Council of Florence gave the finishing blow to the pretensions of the rival Council of Basle.

The history of this rival Council of Florence, had I time to dwell on it, would yield a plentiful crop of reasons for distrusting its infallibility. I do not think Mr. Ffoulkes uses words too strong when he says:—'Of all Councils that ever were held, I suppose there never was one in which hypocrisy, duplicity, and worldly motives played a more conspicuous part. How the Council of Basle was outwitted, and Florence named as the place to which the Greeks should come; how the galleys of the Pope outstripped the galleys of the Council, and bore the Greeks in triumph from Constantinople to a town in the centre of Italy, where the Pope was all-powerful; how they were treated there, and why they were subsequently removed to Florence, would reveal a series of intrigues of the lowest order.' That the Greeks were present there at all was owing to the urgent necessity of obtaining Western aid for the Greek Empire, then on the verge of ruin, against the Turks, by whom, less than sixty years afterwards, Constantinople was taken. The Greek bishops were only induced to

undertake so long a journey on the terms that their expenses were paid by the Pope. But they found that the fulfilment of this bargain depended on their submissiveness. Their allowance for subsistence was three months, four months in arrear, and, when they agreed to unite with the Latins, five months and a-half. 'Though we made frequent demands on account of our need,' says one of them, 'it was not given until we came into the proposed conditions. When we had come round, we received the second monthly allowance.' Their spirits were broken by delays that seemed to them interminable, and they could not get away; for even if they had had money for the journey, passports were denied them. What wonder that, when they got safe home, all the concessions they had made were repudiated. And as to the goodness of the arguments by which the decrees of the Council were supported, it is enough to say that a great source of these arguments was the spurious decretals of which I mean to speak in another Lecture.

But, really, investigation into the history of bygone Councils is needless to one who can remember, as I can, the Council of 1870. In everything I have thus far said to discredit the authority of Councils, I am, as my quotations from Cardinal Newman will have told you, in full agreement with modern Roman Catholics, who think that, when they have shown that infallibility does not reside in Councils, they have gone very near to prove that it does rest with the Pope. Now, if a tradesman has taken pains to produce a belief that his rival in business is little better than a bankrupt, it would be thought strange if he tried to get his bills cashed on the strength of having this rival's endorsement; yet this was exactly what Pius IX. tried to do when he attempted to have his claim to infallibility endorsed by the Vatican Council. In the next Lectures we shall examine what the Pope's bill is worth; at present, it is easy to show that the endorsement is worth absolutely nothing. The unfairness of the proceedings at the Vatican Council was such that the defeated party, in disgust, playing on the old

name, 'Latrocinium Ephesinum,' called it 'Ludibrium Vaticanum.'

There was no fair representation of bishops. In the first place, the assembly included some three hundred titular bishops—bishops not presiding over any real sees, but holding mere titles of honour given them by the Pope, or else missionary bishops deriving their titles from places where there were few or no Christian congregations. In addition, the German bishops, who constituted the main strength of the minority, complained that they were swamped by the multitude of Italian and Sicilian bishops. The twelve millions of Roman Catholics in Germany proper were represented at the Council by fourteen bishops; the seven hundred thousand inhabitants of the Papal States, by sixty-two; three bishops of the minority—Cologne, Paris, and Cambray—represented five million; and these might be outvoted by any four of the seventy Neapolitan and Sicilian bishops. The German theologians compared their learning with that of the bishops of these highly favoured localities, amongst whom a clean sweep would have been made if it had been a condition of admission to the Council that the bishop should be able to read the New Testament in its original language, or have Greek enough to be able to consult the writings of Greek Fathers or the acts of Greek Councils—a qualification without which, north of the Alps, one does not rank as a theologian. The German visitors, too, compared the activity of religious thought in the country from which they came with that in those regions which provided the predominant element at the Council. It was said, and I believe with truth, that more religious books are printed in England, or Germany, or North America in one year than in Italy in half a century. And to the list of Italian publications the States of the Church contributed hardly anything. In Rome a lottery dream-book might be found in every house, but never a New Testament, and extremely seldom any religious book at all. So that it seemed as if it were a recognized principle, that the more ignorant a people, the greater must be the share of

their hierarchy in the government of the Church. Then the minority complained that all regulations as to the transaction of business were in the hands of a committee appointed by the majority, and solely representing them, without the consent of which committee no subject could be discussed; and, indeed, it was complained at first that the bulk of the Council did not know what business was coming on. At the first meeting it was found that, owing to the bad acoustic properties of the hall in which they met, nothing could be heard; and a number of bishops, when asked to give their formal vote, 'Placet' or 'Non placet,' answered, 'Non placet quia nihil intelleximus.' An attempt was made to improve matters in this respect by partitioning off a portion of the room; but bad the state of things always remained. Indeed there must always have been a difficulty in following discussions carried on in Latin—a language which all the bishops did not pronounce in the same way, and which in any case is not so easily caught, if utterance is indistinct, as are the sounds of one's native language. But it would be too much to expect of human attention to follow the speeches which were delivered, these being small treatises without any limitation of length, read by their authors without the liveliness of spoken speech, perhaps with indistinct utterance, and in a language with which the hearers were not familiar. An easy remedy for this state of things would have been if the speeches had been printed and circulated among the members of the Council, so that any could study at home what he had heard imperfectly. But here was the advantage of the Pope's holding the Council in his own city. There was no license of printing. A *précis* of the speaker's arguments was made for the use of an exclusively Infallibilist committee, which was to draw up the decrees of the Council. That *précis* the speaker was not allowed to correct, or even to see, so that if he were on the wrong side, it might be a mere caricature of his arguments which was submitted to the committee.

Perhaps there was the less fear of doing injustice to the arguments, that, as I already quoted from Cardinal Manning, the Holy Spirit's promised assistance is sup-

posed to be given, not to the arguments, but to the final vote. And, certainly, the practical rule resulting from belief in this principle is, 'Never trouble yourself about the arguments, but do all in your power to secure a vote.' Now, there are many ways besides arguments by which votes can be secured. The use of bad arguments was, indeed, not neglected; for a paper was circulated, said to have been drawn up by Manning, containing a decree of the Council of Florence, garbled in a way of which I mean to speak on another day. But there were more powerful influences at work than arguments, good or bad About three hundred of the bishops were the Pope's pensioners, all their expenses being paid by him, and therefore could not be unbiassed judges on a question concerning his prerogatives. The Pope himself had his good-humoured jokes on the numbers who had accepted his hospitality, and declared that, in trying to make him 'infallibile,' they would make him 'fallire,' that is to say, make him bankrupt. There was no danger of that, however; for, in order to enable him to meet such expenses, a well-timed collection was made nominally with the object of making him a present in celebration of the jubilee of his first Mass. Fifteen Cardinals' hats were vacant to reward the obedient; and, no doubt, as always happens, more were influenced by the hope of Papal favours than actually obtained them. The Pope made no secret how much he had his heart set on obtaining a declaration of his infallibility. This alone would weigh very innocently with many bishops who would shrink from displeasing a venerated superior. Two or three bishops, who unexpectedly spoke on the wrong side, received from the Pope the severest of wiggings. 'Lovest thou me?' was his salutation to another waverer.

Now, what would you think of the merits of the British Parliament as a representative assembly if, in addition to inequalities of representation more gross than any in our unreformed Parliament, the Crown was free to make as many rotten boroughs as it pleased, and to name representatives for them; if it had three hundred members

receiving daily pay at its discretion, besides a number of members candidates for promotion; and if the smiles or frowns of the monarch were freely applied to reward or punish? But, at the Council, it was not enough to gain a majority: the minority must be reduced to complete insignificance; and this was effected when, as time went on, the summer months arrived, and the heats at Rome became unbearable—at least to a northern constitution. At first the tactics of the minority had appeared to be to lengthen out the proceedings. They made long speeches, some of them speaking out so plainly that two or three times the greatest uproar was excited; and it really appeared as if there was danger that the scene at Trent would be re-enacted, when one bishop pulled out another bishop's beard. It became necessary for the majority to introduce what the French call the *clôture*:* that is to say, the rule was made that, at the request of ten bishops, it should be put to the vote whether the discussion should go on any longer. And so in the first stage of the Infallibility discussion, a premature stop was put to the speech-making; and, amongst others, an able speech against Infallibility by the American bishop Kenrick was shelved. It has been since printed as a 'concio habenda at non habita.' But when they got into the summer months, the acclimatized Italian and Sicilian bishops could bear delay with comparative impunity; but the opponents of the dogma, who were natives of a colder climate, were one by one sickening with fever. They begged and implored that the Council might be adjourned; but the Pope and his party understood their advantage too well, and the request was sternly refused. It became evident that if the minority indulged in much speech-making, the operation of reducing their numbers would be effected in a very simple way; and so a vote was arrived at.

But now appeared the mischief of the claim to infallibility. In our Parliament a law may be passed in the teeth of opposition, and the minority must submit and obey the law; but

* The word has become more familiar now than it was when this Lectur was written.

their thoughts and words are free: they can avow still that what has been done is opposed to their judgment. But at a Council, when a vote is arrived at, the minority are required to blot from their mind all the tricks and manœuvres, all the unworthy means by which they know their resistance has been overpowered, and to accept the vote of a majority, no matter how obtained, as the voice of the Spirit of God. The moment the decision is pronounced, they are bound not only to yield a decorous obedience, but from the bottom of their hearts to believe that to be true which the moment before they had been protesting was false, and to publish this belief to the world. No wonder the bishops of the minority shrank from the humiliation of saying 'non placet' one moment, and 'ex animo credo' the next. So, with two exceptions, they all ran away, leaving behind them a protest which was not regarded.

It is plain how the chance of arriving at truth is prejudiced by the claim to infallibility. If no such claim were made, the majority would be forced to weigh the arguments of the minority, to count the risk of driving them into schism, to take care not to seem before the world to have the worst of the argument. But when infallibility is supposed to rest with the ultimate vote, the majority have no need to care about the arguments advanced. Secure a vote, no matter how, and all is gained. Thus, while there is no better way of arriving at truth than taking counsel with others, a Council which claims infallibility is a place where the wise and cautious are delivered over, bound hand and foot, to the will of a tyrant majority.

XVIII.

THE PREROGATIVES OF PETER.

IT remains now to speak of that theory of Infallibility which makes the Pope personally its organ. It is the theory now in the ascendant; and, since the Vatican Council, may be regarded as the theory recognized exclusively by the Roman Church; and it is the only theory which satisfies the demands of the *a priori* arguments showing the necessity of an infallible guide. What these arguments try to show to be needful is a guide able infallibly to resolve every controversy as it arises; and this need can only be satisfied by a living speaking voice, not by the dead records of past councils. The truth is, that the much desired object, of uniformity of opinion in the Church, can only be obtained, either on the terms of resolute abstinence from investigation, or else upon the terms of having an inspired teacher at hand competent to make new revelations on every desired occasion. If we adhere to the old theory, that Christ made one revelation, which it was His Church's business to preserve and teach; let that revelation have been as copious as you please, still if it is limited at all, it is of necessity that questions must arise which that revelation will not have determined; on which private judgment is therefore free, and on which, therefore, there will be difference of opinion. If such diversity of opinion is thought an evil, there must be a new revelation to supplement or explain the old one. And this necessity must go on as long as men continue to exercise their thoughts on religious subjects. The difficulty and inconvenience of assembling Councils is so great that the number of General Councils during the whole duration of Christendom has been comparatively few, and the

likelihood that many more will be assembled is but small. The Roman theory then leads you necessarily to expect a kind of incarnation of deity upon earth; one which with infallible voice will decide and silence every dispute. And if this is not to be found in the person of the Pope it is to be found nowhere else.

The marvel however is, that if the Church had from the first possessed this wonderful gift it should have taken eighteen centuries to find it out. It is historically certain that in the year 1870, when it was proposed at the Vatican Council to proclaim the fact, the doctrine was opposed by a number of the leading bishops; and that since the publication a number of most learned, and who up to that time had been most loyal, Roman Catholics, consented to suffer excommunication rather than agree to it. And the reason for their refusal, alleged, as we shall see, with perfect truth, is that this new doctrine is utterly opposed to the facts of history. Although, then, the theory is condemned from the first by its novelty, let us not refuse to examine the grounds on which it is defended.

But I must warn you at the outset that, although it was only the question of Infallibility that I proposed in these Lectures to discuss, I am now forced to spend time on what is really a different question, that of the Pope's alleged supremacy. I am obliged to do so, because I must follow the line of argument adopted by the Roman advocates. Their method is to try to show that Christ made the constitution of His Church monarchical, that He appointed St. Peter to be its first ruler and governor, and that He appointed, moreover, that the bishop of Rome, for the time being, should perpetually be Peter's successor in that office. Suppose they succeed in proving all this: suppose it established that the Pope is, by divine right, sovereign ruler of the Church, it still remains possible that in the course of his rule he may make mistakes, as earthly monarchs who reign by the most legitimate titles are liable to do. And in point of fact it is fully admitted that, in his capacity of ruler and governor, the Pope may make mistakes, and often has made very great ones. To name no

other, one has already come before us in the course of these Lectures. Whether or not it be true that the Popes, in their capacity of teachers, have committed themselves to the declaration that it is heresy to maintain that the earth goes round the sun, it is certain that, in their capacity of rulers, they endeavoured for a long series of years to put down the teaching of that doctrine; and all will own that this attempted suppression was unwise and impolitic, and has brought great discredit on their Church. Clearly, therefore, if the Roman advocates even succeed in establishing the Pope's supremacy, the task still lies before them of proving that the Pope, in his capacity of teacher, is infallible. We sometimes read of Alpine explorers who, in attempting to reach a virgin peak, have found themselves, after infinite labour, on a summit separated by impassable ravines from that which it was their desire to attain. And so in this case, between the doctrines of the Pope's supremacy and of his Infallibility there lies a gulf which it is, in my opinion, impossible to bridge over. To begin with: suppose it proved that St. Peter was universal ruler of the Churches, he certainly was not universal teacher; for the other Apostles who were inspired as well as he had no need to learn from him; and their hearers were as much bound to receive their independent teaching as were St. Peter's own hearers. But I postpone the consideration of difficulties of this kind. At present let us examine what success our opponents have in establishing the doctrine of the Pope's supremacy. If they succeed, it will be time enough then to discuss the question of the Pope's Infallibility; for if they fail, it is all over with the latter doctrine.

And first we have to consider the Scripture argument, resting on a supposed transmission to the Pope of certain prerogatives of St. Peter. In order to make out the theory by this process four things ought to be proved—(1) that Christ gave to St. Peter a primacy over the other Apostles not merely in dignity and precedence, but in authority and jurisdiction, constituting him their guide and teacher and ruler; (2) that this prerogative was not merely personal but designed to be transmitted to successors; (3) that Peter was Bishop of Rome

and continued so to his death; and (4) that those who succeeded Peter in this local office were also the inheritors of his jurisdiction over the whole Church. On this last point alone there would be ample room for controversy. If there be any faith due to the legend that Peter was Bishop of Rome there is some due also to the story that he had been previously Bishop of Antioch, which see might therefore contest with Rome the inheritance of his prerogatives. Again, it was never imagined that the bishop of the town where an Apostle might chance to die thereby derived a claim to apostolic jurisdiction. But Roman Catholic controversialists make short work of the dispute on the last two heads. They argue that if they can prove that Christ ever provided His Church with an infallible guide, and intended him to have a successor, we need not doubt that the Pope is that successor, since there is no rival claimant of the office. It is the more needful, then, to scrutinize carefully the proofs of the first two heads, as these are made to do double duty: not only to prove the proposition on behalf of which they are alleged, but also to induce us to dispense with proof of the others.

The Scripture proof, in the main, consists of three texts; sometimes called *the* three texts, viz. (1) the promise of our Lord to Peter (recorded Matt. xvi.), that upon this rock He would build His Church; (2) His promise (recorded Luke xxii.), 'I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not, and when thou art converted strengthen thy brethren'; and (3) the commission 'Feed my sheep,' related in the last chapter of St. John. Before giving a particular examination to these texts I would remark on the general presumption against the Roman Catholic theory arising out of the whole tenor of the N. T. history, from which we should conclude that, highly as Peter was honoured, he was not placed in an office having jurisdiction over the other Apostles; for the Apostolate is ever spoken of as the highest office in the Christian Church; 'God hath set some in the Church, first Apostles, secondarily prophets' (1 Cor. xii. 28): not, as it ought to be if the Roman theory had been true, first Peter, then the Apostles. The history related in the Acts gives no trace of Peter's having

exercised the prerogatives which are now attributed to him. To take a single example:—When Peter took the decisive step of eating with one uncircumcised, the Church of Jerusalem (Acts xi.) called him sharply to account for a proceeding so repugnant to Jewish traditions; and Peter did not justify himself by pleading his possession of sovereign authority to decide the Church's action in such a matter, but by relating a special revelation sanctioning what he had done. As for the Epistles, they certainly give no support to the theory of Peter's supremacy; and in the story of Paul's resistance to Peter at Antioch they throw in its way one formidable stumbling-block.

Still less is any hint given that Peter was to transmit his office to any successor. I need not say that we are not so much as told that Peter was ever at Rome. The New Testament contains two letters from Peter himself; one purporting to be written immediately before his death, and with the express object that those whom he was leaving behind should be able to keep in memory the things that it was most important for them to know (2 Pet. i. 15). We may be sure that if Peter had any privileges to bequeath he would have done so in this his last will, and that if there was to be any visible head of the Church to whom all Christians were to look for their spiritual guidance, Peter would in these letters have commended him to the reverence of his converts, and directed them implicitly to obey him.

Let us turn now to the texts appealed to. That in St. Matthew is so familiar to you all that I need not read it: but I will give you, in the words of Dr. Murray, one of the ablest of the Maynooth Professors, what this text is supposed to mean. He says, 'Peter was thus established by our Lord as the means of imparting to the Church indefectibility and unity, and of permanently securing these properties to her. Peter was invested with supreme spiritual authority to legislate for the whole Church; to teach, to inspect, to judge, to proscribe erroneous doctrine, or whatever would tend to the destruction of the Church; to appoint to offices or remove therefrom, or limit or extend the jurisdiction thereof, as the

safety or welfare of the Church would require: in one word, to exercise as supreme head and ruler and teacher and pastor all spiritual functions whatever that are necessary for the well-being or existence of the Church.'* It takes one's breath away to read a commentary which finds so much more in a text than lies on the surface of it. If our Lord meant all this, we may ask, why did He not say it? Who found out that He meant it? The Apostles did not find it out at the time; for up to the night before His death the dispute went on, which should be the greatest. When James and John petitioned that in His kingdom they might sit with Him, one on each hand, they do not seem to have suspected, and their Master then gave them no hint, that the chief place in His kingdom had already been given away. There is, as I have just pointed out, no other indication in the New Testament that the Apostolic Church so understood our Lord's words recorded by St. Matthew.

It remains that this interpretation must have been got from unwritten tradition. We eagerly turn to explore the records of that tradition. Here, surely, if anywhere, we shall find that unanimous consent of the Fathers of which the Council of Trent speaks. I have already said that I do not refuse to attribute a certain weight to tradition in the interpretation of Scripture. I have owned that an interpretation of any passage has a certain presumption against it if it is clearly new-fangled: if it derive from the text a doctrine which the Church of the earliest times never found there. The more important the doctrine, the greater the presumption that if true it would have been known from the first. But certainly here is a case where, if the Fathers were ever unanimous, they could not fail to be so if the Roman theory be true. This is no obscure text; no passing remark of an inspired writer; but the great charter text, which for all time fixed the constitution of the Christian Church. If, in these words, our Lord appointed a permanent ruler over His Church, the Church would from the first have resorted to that authority for guidance and for the composing of all disputes, and there

* *Irish Annual Miscellany*, iii. 300.

never could have been any hesitation to recognize the meaning of the charter on which the authority was founded. Yet I suppose there is not a text in the whole New Testament on which the opinion of the Fathers is so divided; and you have to come down late indeed before anyone finds the Bishop of Rome there.

The most elaborate examination of the opinions of the Fathers is in an Epistle* by the French Roman Catholic Launoy, in which, besides the interpretation that Peter was the rock, for which he produces seventeen Patristic testimonies, he gives the interpretations that the rock was the faith which Peter confessed, supported by forty-four quotations;† that the rock was Christ Himself, supported by sixteen; and that the Church was built on all the Apostles, supported by eight. But as Launoy was a Gallican, and as through the progress of development he would not be acknowledged as a good Roman Catholic by the party now in the ascendant, I prefer to quote the Jesuit Maldonatus, whose Romanism is of the most thorough-going kind, and who I may add, on questions where his doctrinal prepossessions do not affect his judgment, is an interpreter of Scripture whose acuteness makes him worth consulting. He begins his commentary on this passage by saying, 'There are among ancient authors some who interpret "on this rock," that is, "on this faith," or "on this confession of faith in which thou hast called me the Son of the living God," as Hilary,‡ and Gregory Nyssen,§ and Chrysostom,‖ and Cyril of Alexandria.¶ St. Augustine going still further away from the true sense, interprets "on this rock," that is, "on myself Christ," because Christ was the rock. But Origen "on this rock," that is to say, on all men who have the same faith.'

* *Epist.* vii., *Opp.* vol. v., pt. 2. p. 99: Geneva, 1731.

† This interpretation may claim the sanction of the Council of Trent, which (Sess. III.) describes the Creed as 'principium illud in quo omnes qui fidem Christi profitentur necessario conveniunt, ac fundamentum firmum et unicum contra quod portae inferi nunquam praevalebunt.'

‡ *De Trin.* lib. vi., 36, 37.

§ *De advent. Dom. in Carne adv. Judaeos.*

‖ Hom. in hunc locum, et Orat. ii., *Cont. Judaeos.*

¶ Dial. 4, *De Trin.*

And then Maldonatus goes on with truly Protestant liberty to discuss each of these interpretations, pronouncing them to be as far as possible from Christ's meaning; and to prove, not by the method of authority, but of reason, that these Fathers were wrong, and that his own interpretation is the right one.

I ought to tell you, however, that St. Augustine is not perfectly uniform in his interpretation. In one of his latest works, his *Retractations*, which does not mean retractations in our modern sense of the word, but a re-handling of things previously treated of, he mentions having sometimes adopted the language which St. Ambrose had used in a hymn, and which designates Peter as the rock of the Church, but most frequently he had interpreted the passage of Christ Himself, led by the texts "that rock was Christ," and "other foundation can no man lay." He leaves his readers at liberty to choose, but his mature judgment evidently inclines to the latter interpretation. He lays more stress than I am inclined to do on the distinction between Petra and Petrus, regarding the latter as derived from the former in the same manner as Christianus from Christus.* 'Thou art Petrus,' he says, 'and on this Petra which thou hast confessed, saying, "thou art Christ the Son of the living God," will I build my Church: that is to say, on myself. I will build thee on myself, not myself on thee. Men willing to build on man said, "I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, and I of Peter." But others, who

* This expositon of St. Augustine's was derived, probably indirectly, from Origen, who, though he speaks incidentally of 'Peter on whom the Church is built' (Ap. Euseb. *H.E.* vi. 25), yet, when directly commenting on the passage in St. Matthew (tom. xii. §§ 10, 11), teaches that every one who makes the same confession of faith as Peter may claim the blessing given to Peter as given to himself. 'If you imagine that it was on Peter alone the Church is built, what then would you say about John the son of Thunder, or any other of the Apostles?' But he teaches that if we make Peter's confession we all are 'Peters.' Just as because we are members of Christ we are called 'Christians;' so Christ being the Petra—the rock—every one who drinks of 'that spiritual rock which follows us' is entitled to be called Petrus. *Ἀλλὰ καὶ Χριστοῦ μέλη ὄντες παρώνυμοι ἐχρημάτισαν χριστιανοί, πέτρας δὲ Πέτροι. . . . Πέτρος γὰρ πᾶς ὁ χριστοῦ μαθητὴς, ἀφ' οὗ ἔπινον οἱ ἐκ πνευματικῆς ἀκολουθούσης πέτρας, καὶ ἐπὶ πᾶσαν τὴν τοιαύτην πέτραν οἰκοδομεῖται ὁ ἐκκλησιατικὸς πᾶς λόγος καὶ ἡ κατ' αὐτὸν πολιτεία· ἐν ἑκάστῳ γὰρ τῶν τελείων, ἐχόντων τὸ ἄθροισμα τῶν συμπληρούντων τὴν μακαριότητα λόγων καὶ ἔργων καὶ νοημάτων, ἔστιν ἡ ὑπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ οἰκοδομουμένη ἐκκλησία.*

were unwilling to be built upon Peter, but would be built on the rock—not on Petrus but on Petra—said, I am of Christ.' Such is Augustine's commentary, which, using my Protestant liberty, I shall not scruple presently to reject. Other Fathers besides Augustine and Origen are not quite uniform in their interpretation: and this is not to be wondered at; because, as we shall presently see, there is a sense in which the Church is founded on Christ alone, a sense in which it was founded on Peter's confession, a sense in which it was founded on Peter or on all the Apostles; so that no matter which interpretation gives the true sense of this particular passage, it is quite easy to harmonize the doctrines which different Fathers derive from it. But none of these can be reconciled with the interpretation which regards this text as containing the charter of the Church's organization. A charter would be worthless if it were left uncertain to whom it was addressed or what powers it conferred. So that the mere fact that Fathers differed in opinion as to what was meant by 'this rock,' and that occasionally the same Father wavered in his opinion on this subject, proves that none of them regarded this text as one establishing a perpetual constitution for the Christian Church. My case is so strong that I could afford to sweep away all evidence of diversity of Patristic interpretation of this text. I could afford to put out of court every Father who interprets 'this rock' of Christ, or of all the Apostles, or of Peter's confession, and to allow the controversy to be determined by the evidence of those Fathers only who understand 'this rock' of Peter himself, and by examining whether they understood this text as conferring a perpetual privilege on Peter *and a local successor*. But at present it is enough that the extract I read from St. Augustine shows plainly enough that at the beginning of the fifth century it had not been discovered that this text contained the charter of the Church's organization, the revelation of the means of imparting to her indefectibility and unity. And if, as I said, it had ever been known in the Church that this was what Christ intended by the words, the tradition could not have been lost; for the constant habit of

resorting to this authority would have kept fresh the memory of our Lord's commands.

We may, then, safely conclude that our Lord did not, in that address to Peter, establish a perpetual constitution for His Church; but as to the historical question, whether He did not, in these words, confer some personal prerogative on Peter, I do not myself scruple to differ from the eminent Fathers whom I have cited as holding the contrary opinion. It seems to me that they have erred in considering the general doctrine of Scripture, rather than what is required by the context of this particular passage. It is undoubtedly the doctrine of Scripture that Christ is the only foundation: 'other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ' (1 Cor. iii. 11). Yet we must remember that the same metaphor may be used to illustrate different truths, and so, according to circumstances, may have different significations. The same Paul who has called Christ the only foundation, tells his Ephesian converts (ii. 10):—'Ye are built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone.' And in like manner we read (Rev. xxi. 14):—'The wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the names of the twelve Apostles of the Lamb.' How is it that there can be no other foundation but Christ, and yet that the Apostles are spoken of as foundations? Plainly because the metaphor is used with different applications. Christ alone is that foundation, from being joined to which the whole building of the Church derives its unity and stability, and gains strength to defy all the assaults of hell. But, in the same manner as any human institution is said to be founded by those men to whom it owes its origin, so we may call those men the foundation of the Church whom God honoured by using them as His instruments in the establishment of it; who were themselves laid as the first living stones in that holy temple, and on whom the other stones of that temple were laid; for it was on their testimony that others received the truth, so that our faith rests on theirs; and (humanly speaking) it is because they believed that we believe. So, again, in like

manner, we are forbidden to call anyone on earth our Father, 'for one is our Father which is in heaven.' And yet, in another sense, Paul did not scruple to call himself the spiritual father of those whom he had begotten in the Gospel. You see, then, that the fact that Christ is called the rock, and that on Him the Church is built, is no hindrance to Peter's also being, in a different sense, called rock, and being said to be the foundation of the Church; so that I consider there is no ground for the fear entertained by some, in ancient and in modern times, that, by applying the words personally to Peter, we should infringe on the honour due to Christ alone.

If there be no such fear, the context inclines us to look on our Lord's words as conferring on Peter a special reward for his confession. For that confession was really the birth of the Christian Church. Our Lord had grown up to the age of thirty, it would seem, unnoticed by His countrymen; certainly without attempting to gather disciples. Then, marked out by the Holy Ghost at His baptism, and proclaimed by John as the Lamb of God, He was joined by followers. They heard His gracious words; they saw His mighty works; they came to think of Him as a prophet, and doubted, in themselves, whether He were not something more. Was it possible that this could be the long promised Messiah? This crisis was the date of Peter's confession. Our Lord saw His disciples' faith struggling into birth, and judged that it was time to give it the confirmation of His own assurance that they had judged rightly. By His questions He encouraged them to put into words the belief which was forcing itself on them all, but to which Peter first dared to give profession. In that profession he proclaimed the distinguishing doctrine of the Christian Church. Up to that time the Apostles had preached repentance. They had been commissioned to announce that the kingdom of heaven was at hand. But thenceforward the religion they preached was one whose main article was faith in Jesus as the Messiah, the Son of God, the Saviour.

When you once understand the importance of this confession, you will understand the warmth of commendation

with which our Lord received what seems to us but the simple profession of an ordinary Christian's faith. We are apt to forget what an effort it was for a Jew, at the time when the nation was in a state of strained and excited expectation of some signal fulfilment of the prophetic announcement of a coming deliverer, to give up his ideal of a coming triumphant Messiah, to fix his hopes on a man of lowly rank, who made no pretensions to the greatness of this world, and to believe that the prophecies were to receive no better fulfilment than what the carpenter's son could give them. One proportions praise and encouragement, not only to the importance of the thing done, but also to its difficulty to him who does it. The act of running a few steps alone, or of saying a few articulate words is a feat on which none of you would dream of priding himself; but with what praise and encouragement parents welcome a child's first attempt to walk without support; with what delight they catch at the first few words he is able to pronounce. And it is not only that the first efforts of the child are as difficult to him as some more laborious exercise would be to us; but also that first victory is the pledge of many more. The very first words a child pronounces give his parents the assurance that that child is not, either through want of intellect or through want of powers of speech, doomed to be separated from intercourse with mankind. The learning these two or three words gives the assurance that he will afterwards be able to master all the other difficulties of language, and will be capable of all the varied delights which speech affords. And so in that first profession of faith in Christ, imperfect though it was, and though it was shown immediately afterwards how much as to the true character of the Messiah remained to be learned, still in that confession was contained the pledge of every future profession of faith which the Church then founded has since been able to put forth. This accounts for the encouragement and praise with which our Lord received that confession. I own it seems to me the most obvious and natural way of understanding our Lord's words to take them as conferring a personal honour in reward for that confession. Thy name I

have called Rock: and on thee and on this confession of thine I will found my Church. For that confession really was the foundation of the Church. Just as in some noble sacred music, the strain which a single voice has led is responded to by the voices of the full choir, so that glorious hymn of praise, which Peter was the first to raise, has been caught up and re-echoed by the voices of the redeemed in every age. Nay, the anthem of thanksgiving to Jesus, the Son of God, which has filled the mouths of the Church militant on earth, shall still be the burden of their songs in heaven as they ascribe 'blessing, and honour, and glory, and power to Him that sitteth on the throne, and unto the Lamb.'

It was not only in this first recognition of the true character of our Lord that Peter was foremost. Jesus fulfilled His promise to him by honouring him with the foremost place in each of the successive steps by which the Church was developed. It was through St. Peter's sermon on the day of Pentecost that the first addition was made to the numbers of the disciples whom our Lord Himself had collected, when on one day there was added to the Church 3000 souls; and it was by Peter's mission to Cornelius that the first step was made to the admission of Gentiles to the Church; thus causing it to overleap the narrow barriers of Judaism and to embrace all the families of the earth. Thus the words of our Lord were fulfilled in that Peter was honoured by being the foremost among the human agents by which the Church was founded.* But I need not say that this was an honour in which it was impossible he could have a successor. We might just as well speak of Adam's having a successor in the honour of being the first man, as of Peter's having a successor in the place which he occupied in founding the Christian Church.

I have said that the Romanist interpretation of the text we have been considering is refuted by the fact that many eminent Fathers do not understand the rock as meaning St. Peter. You will see now, that even if they did,† as I do

* The same explanation may be given of the bestowal on Peter of the keys of the kingdom of heaven.

† For example Tertullian, the earliest writer quoted as interpreting the 'Rock'

myself, the Romanist consequences would not follow. If Peter were the foundation of the Church in any other sense than I have explained, it would have shaken immediately afterwards when our Lord said unto him: 'Get thee behind me, Satan,' and tottered to its base when he denied his Lord. Immediately after Peter had earned commendation by his acknowledgment of Jesus as the Messiah, the doctrine of a crucified Messiah was proposed to him and he rejected it. So that if the Apostles had believed that the words 'On this rock I will build my Church' constituted Peter their infallible guide, the very first time they followed his guidance they would have been led into miserable error. They would have been led by him to reject the Cross, on which we rely as our atonement, and on which we place all our hope of salvation. I will not delay to speak of the latter part of the passage, because it is clear that the privileges therein spoken of are not peculiar to Peter, very similar words being used in the 18th of St. Matthew to all the Apostles.

I hasten on to the words in St. Luke, on which Roman Catholics are forced to lay much of their case. For when it is pointed out, as I did just now, that the charge in St. Matthew clearly did not render Peter competent to guide the Apostles, it is owned that the due powers were not given to him then, but it is said they were conferred afterwards. When it is pointed out that the disputes among the Apostles for precedence show that they were not aware that Peter had been made their ruler, it is answered that our Lord on the night before He was betrayed decided the subject of these disputes in His charge to Peter. Our habitual use of the second person plural in addressing individuals so disguises from the modern English reader the force of the Roman Catholic argument, that I have hardly ever found anyone who could quote correctly that familiar text about sifting as wheat unless his attention had been specially called to it. Our Lord's words do very strongly bring out a special gift to

to mean St. Peter, contends vehemently (*De Pudic.* 21) that the privilege conferred by our Lord on that occasion was exclusively personal, and was fulfilled by the part Peter took in the first formation of the Church.

Peter. 'Simon, Simon, Satan hath desired to have you (ὑμᾶς, all the Apostles) that he may sift you as wheat; but I have prayed for thee (Peter) that thy faith fail not, and when thou art converted strengthen thy brethren.' But certainly no one who interpreted Scripture according to its obvious meaning could suspect that the passage contains a revelation concerning the Church's appointed guide to truth in all time The whole passage refers, on the face of it, to the immediate danger the faith of the Apostles was in from those trials under the pressure of which they all deserted their Master. There was a special prayer for Peter because of his special danger, and we see that this prayer did not exclude a grievous fall. If no security of unbroken constancy in the faith was thereby gained to Peter, for whom the prayer was directly made, we have no ground for supposing that it had greater efficacy in the case of any alleged successors, to whom the petition can at most apply indirectly. It may be added that the work of 'strengthening' his brethren, thereby committed to Peter (one to which *he* was peculiarly bound, whose fall had perilled men's faith), was no peculiar prerogative of Peter's. The same word στηρίζειν is used in three or four places in the Acts (xiv. 22; xv. 32, 41; xviii. 23) of Paul's confirming the Churches of Syria and Cilicia, of Judas and Silas confirming the brethren at Antioch, of Timothy confirming the Thessalonian Church. And most remarkable of all, Paul when purposing to visit Rome, which is said to have been Peter's peculiar charge, expects that it is by *his* instrumentality this benefit will be conferred on the Roman Church: 'I long to see you that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end ye may be established εἰς τὸ στηριχθῆναι ὑμᾶς (Rom. i. 11).

I may here, in passing, mention another passage (2 Cor. xi. 28), where Paul shows himself strangely unconscious of Peter's prerogatives. For, having enumerated some of his labours and sufferings in the cause of the Gospel, he adds: 'Beside those things that are without, that which cometh on me daily, the care of all the Churches.' If, as Roman theory would have it, the care of all the Churches

was Peter's province, St. Paul is most unreasonable in complaining of the trouble he had incurred through gratuitously meddling with another man's work, thus literally becoming what St. Peter himself called an ἀλλοτριοεπίσκοπος (1 Pet. iv. 15). But Paul elsewhere (Gal. ii. 8) limits Peter's province to the 'Apostleship of the Circumcision,' that is to say, to the superintendence of the Jewish Churches; and states that the work of evangelizing the Gentiles had, by agreement with the three chief Apostles, been specially committed to himself and Barnabas.

This prayer for Peter is so clearly personal that some Roman Catholic controversialists do not rely on this passage at all. Neither can they produce any early writers who deduce from it anything in favour of the Roman See. Bellarmine can quote nothing earlier than the eleventh century, except the suspicious evidence of some Popes in their own cause, of whom the earliest to speak distinctly is Pope Agatho in his address to the sixth general council, A.D. 680. How earlier Fathers understood the passage will appear plainly from Chrysostom's commentary,* when he answers the question why Peter is specially addressed: 'He said this sharply reproving him, and showing that his fall was more grievous than that of the others, and needed greater assistance. For he had been guilty of two faults, that he contradicted our Lord when He said all shall be offended, saying, "though all should be offended, yet will I never be offended;" and secondly, that he set himself above the others: and we may add a third fault, that he ascribed all to himself. In order, then, to heal these diseases, our Lord permitted him to fall; and therefore passing by the others He turns to him: "Simon, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat (that is to say, might trouble you, harass you, tempt you), but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not." Why, if Satan desired to have all, does not our Lord say, I have prayed for all? Is it not plainly for the reason I have mentioned? By way of rebuke to him, and showing that his fall was worse than that of the others He turns His speech to

* *Hom.* 82. In Matt. xxvi., vol. vii., p. 785.

him.'* Similar language is used by a much later expositor, the Venerable Bede, in his commentary on this text of St. Luke. He explains it 'as I have by praying preserved thy faith that it should not fail under the temptation of Satan, so also do thou be mindful to raise up and comfort thy weaker brethren by the example of thy penitence, lest perchance they despair of pardon.' It is plain that the great teachers of the Church were ignorant for hundreds of years that this text contained more than a personal promise to the Apostle about to be tried by a special temptation, and that they never found out it was a charter text revealing the constitution of the Christian Church.

I come now to the third text, the 'Feed my sheep' of St. John; and here too, certainly, there is no indication in the text itself that there was an appointment to an office peculiar in its kind. The office of tending Christ's sheep is certainly not peculiar to St. Peter. It is committed, in even more general terms, by St. Paul to the Ephesian elders, 'Feed the Church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood' (Acts xx. 28); and by Peter himself to his fellow elders, 'Feed the flock of God which is among you' (1 Pet. v. 1). The sequel of the story, too, is adverse to the supposition that our Lord meant to confer on St. Peter the oversight of his fellow Apostles. For when he asks concerning St. John, 'What shall this man do?' he receives something like a rebuke:

* It is proper to mention, by way of set off, that in the Homilies on the Acts, ascribed to Chrysostom (vol. ix., p. 26), the part taken by Peter in initiating the election of Matthias is treated as resulting from the prerogatives bestowed in the words recorded in St. Luke's Gospel: *εἰκότως πρῶτος τοῦ πράγματος αὐθεντεῖ, ἅτε αὐτὸς πάντας ἐγχειρισθείς, πρὸς γὰρ τοῦτον εἶπεν ὁ Χριστός· καὶ σύ ποτε ἐπιστρέψας στήριξον τοὺς ἀδελφούς σου.* Chrysostom's authorship of the Homilies on the Acts has been much disputed on account of their great inferiority, both in style and treatment, to his unquestioned writings. Erasmus is so impolite as to say 'Nihil unquam legi indoctius. Ebrius ac stertens scriberem meliora.' Great preachers, however, are not always at their best, and possibly these Homilies, as they have come down to us, are a bad report of sermons really delivered by St. Chrysostom. And vacillations of interpretation are so common with the fathers, that I do not regard it as a proof of diverse authorship that the text in St. Luke is dealt with differently in these Homilies and those in St. Matthew. But on no supposition is the question at issue more than the speculative one, what prerogatives were enjoyed by Peter personally; no ambiguity of interpretation could have been tolerated if Chrysostom had imagined that the text in Luke determined the constitution of the Church in his own day.

'What is that to thee? follow thou me.' I don't know any respectable Patristic authority for understanding the passage otherwise than Cyril of Alexandria, whose commentary we may well adopt: 'If anyone asks for what cause he asked Simon only, though the other disciples were present, and what he means by "Feed my lambs" and the like, we answer that St. Peter, with the other disciples, had been already chosen to the Apostleship, but because meanwhile Peter had fallen (for under great fear he had thrice denied the Lord), he now heals him that was sick, and exacts a threefold confession in place of his triple denial, contrasting the former with the latter, and compensating the fault with the correction.' And again, 'By the triple confession Peter abrogates the sin contracted in his triple denial. For from what our Lord says, 'Feed my lambs,' a renewal of the Apostolate already delivered to him is considered to have been made which presently absolves the disgrace of his sin and blots out the perplexity of his human infirmity.' I shall not detain you longer with the Scripture argument; nor shall I examine, for instance, how Romanist advocates struggle to make out that the appointment of Matthias was made by the single authority of Peter, because the whole history of the Acts (as, for instance, the appointment of the seven deacons, the conversion of Samaria, where we find not 'Peter took John' but 'the Apostles sent Peter and John'), shows that the original constitution of the Church was not monarchical, and that when that of the Jerusalem Church became so, James, and not Peter, was its ruler. I may mention, that in the Clementines of which I shall have occasion to speak again presently, and which did so much to raise the authority attributed to Peter in the Church, it is James, not Clement, who is bishop of bishops and supreme ruler; and to James Peter must yearly render an account of his doings.*

* In a still later forgery, the Decretal Epistles, this is rectified. Among these is a letter supposed to be written by Clement, after Peter's death, to James, although, according to Eusebius, James died before Peter. In this letter Clement, as Peter's successor, assumes the position of James's master and teacher:—'Quoniam sicut a beato Petro Apostolo accepimus, omnium Apostolorum patre qui claves regni cœlestis accepit, qualiter tenere debemus de sacramentis, te ex ordine nos decet instruere.'

XIX.

PETER'S ALLEGED ROMAN EPISCOPATE.

I COUNT it as proved in the last Lecture that we have no Scripture warrant for regarding Peter as more than a foremost (or, if you will, *the* foremost) member of the Apostolic college, or as having any precedence but such as his boldness, promptitude, and energy gave him; and that there is no trace of his having held over the Church any official position of headship, wherein, according to Christ's intention, he was to have a successor. I go on now to consider Peter's connexion with Rome, which I look on as a mere historical problem, without any doctrinal significance whatever way it may be determined. The generally received account among Roman Catholics, and one which can claim a long traditional acceptance, is that Peter came to Rome in the second year of Claudius (that is, A.D. 42), and that he held the see twenty-five years, a length of episcopate never reached again until by Pio Nono, who exceeded it. It used to be said (but I believe untruly) that as part of the ceremony of a Pope's installation he was addressed 'Non videbis annos Petri.' Now if it is possible to prove a negative at all, we may conclude, with at least high probability, that Peter was not at Rome during any of the time on which the writings of the canonical Scriptures throw much light, and almost certainly that during that time he was not its bishop. We have an Epistle of Paul to the Romans full of salutations to his friends there, but no mention of their bishop. Nor is anything said of work done by Peter in founding that Church. On the contrary, it is implied that no Apostle had as yet visited it; for such is the inference

from the passage already cited, in which Paul expresses his wish to see the Roman Christians in order that he might impart some spiritual gift to the end that they might be established. We have letters of Paul from Rome in which no message is sent from Peter; and in the very last of these letters Paul complains of being left alone, and that only Luke was with him. Was Peter one of the deserters? The Scripture accounts of Peter place him in Judæa, in Antioch, possibly in Corinth, but finally in Babylon. I have discussed, in a former series of Lectures, whether this is to be understood literally, or whether we have here the first indication of Peter's presence at Rome. But plainly, if Peter was ever at Rome, it was after the date of Paul's second Epistle to Timothy.

Some Protestant controversialists have asserted that Peter was never at Rome; but though the proofs that he was there are not so strong as I should like them to be if I had any doctrine depending on it, I think the historic probability is that he was; though, as I say, at a late period of the history, and not long before his death. I dare say some of you know that there was a controversy on this subject at Rome not long after the Pope ceased to be the temporal ruler of the city. Quite lately I have seen it still placarded as 'the immortal discussion at Rome.' Roman Catholic priests are, as a general rule, not fond of controversy; but they were tempted into it this time by the fact that victory seemed certain; for the Protestant champions had undertaken the impossible task of proving the negative, that Peter was never at Rome. They might as well have undertaken to prove out of the Bible that St. Bartholomew never preached in Pekin. I don't suppose he did; but I don't know how you could prove out of Scripture that he didn't. The event showed, however, of how little use a logical victory sometimes is. When the Protestants began to use such arguments as I employed just now in order to prove that Peter had not been twenty-five years bishop, the Romanists interrupted them by pointing out that that was not the question. 'You undertook to prove he was *never* at Rome. We need

not talk about twenty-five years; if he was there a day, or an hour, your cause is lost.' Thereupon their opponents raised a shout of triumph. 'Here are the men who, until we encountered them, had been asserting a twenty-five years' episcopate; and now they give up the whole fable the moment they are grappled with, and are reduced to contend for a day or an hour.'

For myself, I am willing, in the absence of any opposing tradition, to accept the current account that Peter suffered martyrdom at Rome. We know with certainty from John xxi. that Peter suffered martyrdom somewhere. If Rome, which early laid claim to have witnessed that martyrdom, were not the scene of it, where then did it take place? Any city would be glad to claim such a connexion with the name of the Apostle, and none but Rome made the claim. The place of Peter's martyrdom was, no doubt, known to St. John, and, we may reasonably think, was also known in the circle where his Gospel was first published. Now all agree that the date of that publication was quite late in the apostolic age; and the interval, till the time when men began to make written record of what they could learn by apostolic tradition, is too short to allow of the true tradition as to the place of St. Peter's martyrdom being utterly lost, and a quite false one substituted. In the earliest uninspired Christian writing, the Epistle of Clement of Rome, he makes mention of the martyrdom of Peter and Paul, but does not name the place where they suffered. There is a fair presumption, however, that in this Roman document Rome is intended. The earliest express mention of Italy as the place of their martyrdom is in a letter of Dionysius, Bishop of Corinth, about 170. There is mention of their tombs at Rome in a dialogue of Caius the Roman presbyter, about A. D. 200, and from that time this tradition reigned without a rival. If this evidence for Peter's Roman martyrdom be not deemed sufficient, there are few things in the history of the early Church which it will be possible to demonstrate.

From the question, whether Peter ever visited Rome, we pass now to a very different question: whether he was its

bishop. Absentees are not popular in this country; but the worst of absentees is an absentee bishop. We think it scandalous when we read of bishops a hundred years ago who never went near their sees; but this abuse has now been completely rooted out of our Church. Canons against non-residence were made in earlier times; but, if we are to believe Roman theory, the bad example had been set by St. Peter, who was the first absentee bishop. If he became bishop of Rome in the second year of Claudius, he appears never afterwards to have gone near his see until close upon his death. Nay, he never even wrote a letter to his Church while he was away; or if he did, they did not think it worth preserving.

Baronius (in *Ann.* lviii. § 51) owns the force of the Scripture reasons for believing that Peter was not in Rome during any time on which the New Testament throws light. His theory is that, when Claudius commanded all Jews to leave Rome, Peter was forced to go away. And as for his subsequent absences, they were forced on him by his duty as the chief of the Apostles, having care of all the Churches. 'Paul preached the Gospel from Jerusalem round about unto Illyricum, and, not satisfied with that, designed to go even to Spain besides. Can we imagine Peter to have been less active?' These, no doubt, are excellent reasons for Peter's not remaining at Rome; but why, then, did he undertake duties which he must have known he could not fulfil?

There is another respect in which the accepted version of Peter's history accuses him of having set a bad example. In the primitive Church it was accounted a discreditable thing for a bishop to migrate from one see to another; and especially from a poorer see to a richer; it was accounted a kind of spiritual adultery, this forsaking a poorer wife for a richer. Several early canons forbade the practice; and I have mentioned how one of them was worked against Gregory Nazianzen. Pope Leo (*Ep.* 84), in a decree incorporated in the Canon law (*Si quis Episcopus*, c. 7, qu. 1, cap. 31), ordered:—'If any bishop, despising the meanness of his see, seeks for the administration of a more eminent place, and for any reason transfers himself to a greater people, he shall

not only be driven out of the see which did not belong to him, but he shall also lose his own, so as neither to preside over those whom in his avarice he coveted, nor over those whom in his pride he despised.' Yet we are told that Peter, in order to obtain the see of Rome, abandoned that of Antioch, which he had previously held for seven years.

On this charge, at least, Peter may fairly claim an acquittal; for whatever credit may be due to the story of his Roman episcopate, the story of the Antiochene episcopate is entitled to still less, being both of later origin and far less widely believed. In fact, I consider that it was the circulation of the tale of Peter's Roman episcopate which stimulated the invention of Syrian Christians to make out an equal honour for their capital. There is a current story of an Englishman, who, in a country where veracity was not cultivated, found a claim made on him for the repayment of money which he had never received. At the trial he heard the fact of his having received the money attested by so many witnesses that he could not conceive how his own advocate could be able to break the case down. But he was not prepared for the line of defence actually adopted, which was to produce an equal number of credible witnesses who had been present when the money was duly paid back. On much the same system Eastern Christians attempted no contradiction of the story that Peter had been bishop of Rome; but they had the wit to see that the date assigned for his coming to that city left some years free, between the dates of our Lord's Ascension and A. D. 42, of which use might be made to establish an earlier dignity for Antioch. The Westerns were equally polite in accepting the Eastern story, the truth of which is strenuously maintained by Baronius, who relies on its being adopted in the Chronicle of Eusebius. And it is true that the story was fully accepted in the fourth century; but much earlier evidence would be necessary in order to establish its truth.*

* I chanced lately to have my attention drawn to another attempt to give early Church history a Syrian colouring. I looked into the *Evidence for the Papacy*, by the late Lord Lindsay (afterwards Earl of Crawford), in order to see whether it

With regard to the Roman episcopate—in other words, with regard to the charge against Peter, of having undertaken local duties which he must have known his apostolic labours could not permit him to fulfil—we might be disposed to give him an acquittal on the ground of character alone. But it is satisfactory to be able to report that the case against him completely breaks down. In fact, we can say with confidence that the story had not arisen in the year 180; for Irenæus, in a work published shortly after that year (*Hær.* iii. 3), ascribes the establishment of the Roman Church to Paul as well as Peter; and then adds, 'the blessed apostles having founded and built the Church, committed the episcopal office to Linus. Of this Linus St. Paul makes mention in his Epistle to Timothy. To him succeeded Anencletus* [elsewhere called Cletus, or Anacletus]. After him Clement succeeded in the third place from the apostles.' Thus Linus is made the first

was a book of which I needed to take notice. I found that, in producing his very first Patristic witness, the author was so unlucky as to stumble into both the traps into which an inexperienced explorer of antiquity is in danger of falling: he took a spurious work for genuine; and he completely misconceived what his witness meant to say. The witness was Ignatius, who, in writing to the Romans, says: 'I do not command you like Peter and Paul;' from which it is a common and, as I believe, a just inference that Ignatius regarded these two Apostles as having some local connexion with that Church. But Lord Lindsay goes on to argue that Ignatius says elsewhere (*Ad Magnes.* 10) that 'the disciples were called Christians first at Antioch when Peter and Paul were founding the Church.' He asks why Ignatius did not say, 'when *the Apostles* were founding the Church,' unless that he regarded these two Apostles, with whom the Church of Rome was connected, as superior in rank to the rest. But the second passage has a coincidence with Irenæus which would have awakened Lord Lindsay's suspicions if he had been more familiar with early Fathers; and it is, in fact, taken from the longer form of the Ignatian Epistles, which critics of all schools now own to be spurious. But what is amusing is, that nothing could be further from this Syrian forger's intention than to furnish evidence in support of Roman claims. On the contrary, he takes the phrase which Irenæus had used about Peter and Paul founding the Church of Rome, and transfers it to the Church of Antioch.

* 'Anacletus is no name I ever heard of. But Anencletus (meaning the same as Innocentius) is found as a man's name in a Greek inscription (Boeckh, *Corp. Inscr.* i. 116, n. 1240). The Greeks always have Anencletus. In Photius (*Cod.* 113, p. 90, Bekker) the name stands Anacletus; but the *Cod. Marc.* has the right form, Anencletus, as Dindorf observes (*Thes. Gr.*). The name Cletus is equally unknown, and is clearly a corruption of Anencletus, which sounded strange to Latin ears.'—(Von Döllinger, *First Age of the Church*, ii. 153, Oxenham's translation, 1877).

bishop of Rome, and his appointment St. Paul's work as much as Peter's. This is the earliest account we have of the succession of the Roman bishops. It is really useless to cite other authorities; for a doctrine so fundamental as Peter's episcopate and its consequences is alleged to be, if true at all, could not but be known to Irenæus. It is worth mentioning, as a sample of the way in which controversy is conducted, that in Wiseman's Lectures this quotation from Irenæus is prominent among the proofs that Peter was bishop of Rome, the quotation being so garbled as to make it seem that Linus succeeded Peter in the episcopate instead of being appointed first bishop by Peter and Paul.*

I have said quite enough for the mere purpose of refutation of the Roman claims; but to me it is always pleasanter to deal with questions historically than controversially; and I wish, therefore, to state the conclusions (some of them as I think certain, some of them from the nature of the case only probable) which I consider would be arrived at by a historical inquirer with no theological purpose in view, on the questions: What was the connexion of Peter and Paul with the Roman Church? How came it to believe that Peter had been its first bishop? and, How came the duration of his episcopate to be fixed at twenty-five years? I am justified in thinking that candid inquirers need not differ very much on these questions, because I find that the results at which I had arrived independently are, on several points, in agreement with those obtained by von Döllinger in his *First Age of the Church*, a book published while he was still in full com-

* The whole passage is amusing:—'I presume it will not be necessary to enter into any argument to show that St. Peter was the first bishop of Rome. . . . Among the moderns it may be sufficient to observe that no ecclesiastical writer of any note pretends to deny this fact. "To St. Peter," as St. Irenæus observes, "succeeded Linus, to Linus Anacletus, then in the third place Clement" ' (*Lectures on the Catholic Church*, Lect. 8, vol. i., p. 278). I think I have already remarked that a controversialist who has ventured on an assertion which, when challenged, he finds himself unable to prove, has no better resource than to protest loudly that the thing is too evident to need any proof. Dr. Cunningham is equally positive the other way. He says (*Growth of the Church*, p. 43):—'No ecclesiastical historian, who is free from ecclesiastical trammels, now believes that Peter was bishop of Rome.' And he is the nearer the truth of the two, as may be judged from the line taken by von Döllinger.

munion with the Church of Rome, and was regarded as its ablest champion.

I have seen, in a Roman Catholic book of controversy, the question put, Who founded the Church of Rome? and the answer given: It could not have been St. Paul, because we learn from his Epistle that there was a Church at Rome before he had visited that city; therefore the founder could have been no one but St. Peter. But there are absolutely no grounds for the tacit assumption in this argument, that the Church of Rome must have been founded by some Apostle. On the contrary, we know (Acts ii. 10) that 'strangers of Rome' were present on the day of Pentecost; and we may reasonably believe that some of them soon returned to that city, whither also the constant influx of visitors from every part of the empire would be sure soon to bring some professors of the Christian faith. It follows that the origin of the Church of Rome is not to be ascribed, as in the case of some other cities, to the exertions of some missionary arriving with the express intention of evangelizing the city, but was due to silent and spontaneous growth. It is quite possible that among those who came to Rome were some 'prophets or teachers,' but very unlikely that for some time any Apostles were among the visitors. I do not attach credit to the tradition told in the *Preaching of Peter*,* and also by Apollonius,† that our Lord commanded His Apostles not to leave Jerusalem for twelve years after His Ascension; but all probability is opposed to their having, for a considerable time, made missionary journeys to distant places. The example seems to have been set by Paul in the year 48; and even he seems to have needed a special revelation to induce him to cross from Asia into Europe (Acts xvi. 9): so that, bearing in mind how slowly the idea of throwing open the doors of the Church to the Gentiles gained acceptance with the first disciples, we must pronounce it a complete anachronism to imagine an assault made by an Apostle on the capital of the Gentile world so early as the year 42. I have already said that the Epistle to the Romans gives us

* Clem. Alex. *Strom.* vi. 5. † Euseb. *H. E.* v. 18.

every reason to think that Paul was the first Apostle to visit that city.*

But what, then, are we to say to the statement of Irenæus that Peter and Paul founded the Church of Rome? Probably the simple account of the matter is, that the visit of the two great Apostles was such an important event in the history of the Roman Church that the men of the next generations did not care to trace that history further back; but it is likely enough that these Apostles, at the time of their visit, did important work in organizing the Roman Church, and guiding it through the period of transition from the state in which the Church was taught by missionaries, or men endowed with miraculous gifts, to the permanent state in which it was under the guidance of a settled ministry. That the two Apostles founded the Church of Rome in the sense of appointing its first bishop is a thing by no means incredible, even if we do not regard the authority of Irenæus sufficient to enable us to assert it as an ascertained fact.

But we travel at once out of the region of historic probability when any evidence, tending to induce us to believe that St. Peter once visited Rome, is taken as establishing that he was bishop of Rome. The case is much the same as if some person, zealous for the honour of the city of London, were to maintain that King Alfred had been its first Lord Mayor; and by way of proof were to present us with some evidence that King Alfred had visited London, in which city he would, of course, when present, have been the most important personage. The functions of a King and a Lord Mayor are not more distinct than those of an Apostle and a local bishop.

On the question of the date of the origin of episcopacy, candid men on both sides appear to me to be now approaching to very close agreement. On the one hand, it may be

* On this point I differ from von Döllinger, who says (*First Age*, i. 160):—'The notion of a gradual origin of the community without any particular founder, or of Aquila and Priscilla being its founders, or St. Paul himself, is self-evidently untenable.' As I remarked just now, if a man says a thing is self-evident, it usually means that he can give no proof of it.

regarded as certain that, at the end of the second century, there not only were bishops everywhere, but there was no recollection that the constitution of the Church had ever been different; and men even found it hard to conceive the idea of a Church without its bishop. On the other hand, we find, in the Acts of the Apostles, but one clear indication of a Church being presided over by a single resident ruler, namely, that of the Church of Jerusalem, presided over by St. James. For other such indications we have to go down to St. Paul's later Epistles, and perhaps to the Revelation and the third Epistle of St. John. In the New Testament records of the apostolic age, though we find 'bishops' mentioned, the word does not appear to denote persons singly bearing rule in separate Churches, but to be employed as equivalent to 'presbyters'; and this use is continued in the genuine epistle of Clement of Rome. It is found also in the lately recovered *Teaching of the Twelve Apostles*. Thus, then, although I hold that the episcopal form of Church government dates from apostolic times, I consider also that its rise must be placed quite late in apostolic times. This is the opinion of von Döllinger, who says (*First Age*, ii. 130):—'The office afterwards called episcopal was not yet marked off; the Episcopate slept in the Apostolate. It was the last branch to grow out of the apostolic stem. In Jerusalem it had already taken shape in the person of St. James, whose attitude towards the local Church, his renunciation of missionary work, and his remaining within the holy city, point him out as the first true and proper bishop. The other Apostles discharged their episcopal office in superintending and guiding different communities.' My own opinion is that St. James was not only bishop of Jerusalem, but that the veneration gained for him, both by his personal character and by his kinship to our Lord, obtained for him, as the Clementine author believed, that position of primacy over the whole Church which, in later times, it was imagined had been possessed by Peter. In fact, Jerusalem, being the mother Church, naturally exercised commanding influence over the daughter Churches (Acts xv. 1, Gal. ii. 12); and so

the head of the Church of Jerusalem possessed, over the entire, authority the exact extent of which we need not trouble ourselves to define.

Von Döllinger attempts to explain why the branching off of the Episcopate as a distinct office did not take place earlier. He considers that, 'while the Temple stood, and the connexion with Judaism was not finally dissolved, the organization of the Church was, in one sense, incomplete and provisional. It might in the interval have presbyters, who were a common Jewish institution; and their appointment was no sign of separation; but the appointment of bishops would certainly have been regarded by all Jews, and by Christians also, as an act sealing the exclusion of the Church, and its definitive separation from the Israelite nation and religion. Therefore the Apostles retained the episcopal authority provisionally in their own hands'; and he goes on to urge that until the two nationalities, the Jewish and Gentile, were completely amalgamated, their mutual jealousies (exhibited, for instance, in Acts vi.) would have made it difficult for a bishop, chosen from either party, to obtain submission from the other. And he urges, further, that it would be difficult, in newly-formed Churches, to find men with due qualifications for single rule; and that in such Churches it would be easier to find a dozen presbyters than one bishop. The result is, that we may not only think it an absurdity to speak of an Apostle as bishop of Rome, but also, without at all denying the apostolic origin of episcopacy, may count it an anachronism to speak of anyone as bishop of Rome in the year 42.

Accordingly, although Döllinger, as a good Roman Catholic, contends that St. Peter was the founder of the Church of Rome, yet he appears to shrink from calling him bishop of Rome, and even explains away the story of his twenty-five years' episcopate. He says (ii. 149):—'From this list [the Liberian] comes the much-criticised statement of the twenty-five years' duration of St. Peter's episcopate. This does not mean that he was bishop *at Rome* twenty-five years, as it was afterwards misunderstood, but that from Christ's Ascension

to his death was twenty-five years, during which he held his episcopate—that is to say, his dignity in the Church.' For myself, I cannot admit that there was any misunderstanding, for I do not believe that those who asserted Peter's Roman episcopate intended to be understood in any but the obvious sense of the words; but Döllinger's explanation is quite necessary in order to make the assertion consistent with truth. But, according to this explanation, St. Paul had the same right as St. Peter to be accounted bishop of Rome, and each Apostle to be accounted also bishop of each of the Churches which enjoyed his superintending care. So that, if we call an Apostle bishop because he exercised episcopal—nay, more than episcopal—power, we must also hold that, in apostolic times, one bishop might hold several sees, and one see have, at the same time, more bishops than one.

I have already stated that the earliest list of Roman bishops we have got is that published by Irenæus about A. D. 180. But Irenæus was not the first to publish a list of Roman bishops. A list had been made by Hegesippus some twenty years earlier, as we learn from an extract from his writings preserved by Eusebius (*H. E.*, iv. 22). The claim of certain Gnostic sects to have derived their peculiar doctrines by secret tradition from the Apostles stirred up the members of the Catholic Church to offer proof that whatever apostolic traditions there were must be sought in those Churches which had been founded by Apostles, and which could trace the succession of their bishops to men appointed by Apostles. It would seem to be with the object of collecting evidence for such a proof that Hegesippus travelled to Rome. He states that on his way he stopped at Corinth, where he found Primus as bishop, and was refreshed with the orthodox doctrine of the Church, which it had held since its first foundation. Thence he proceeded to Rome, where he arrived in the episcopate of Anicetus, which may be roughly dated as A.D. 155–165. He tells us that he then made a 'succession of bishops' (*διαδοχήν*) down to Anicetus; and that in every city and in every succession the teaching was in accordance

with the law, and the prophets,* and the Lord. He adds that to Anicetus succeeded Soter, and to Soter Eleutherus, who had been deacon to Anicetus. Thus it appears that the work from which Eusebius made his extract was published in the episcopate of Eleutherus—the same episcopate as that in which the work of Irenæus was published. But it may reasonably be inferred that Hegesippus had published his list of bishops in the time of Anicetus, to which, in the later work, he merely adds the names of the two bishops, Soter and Eleutherus, who had succeeded Anicetus. Nothing more than what is here quoted is directly known of the list of Hegesippus; but Bishop Lightfoot has lately (*Academy*, May 21, 1887) given reasons, which to me appear convincing, for thinking that we have indirect means of knowledge of it.

Epiphanius (*Hær.* xxvii. 6) gives a list of Roman bishops, beginning with Peter and Paul, and ending with Anicetus. This list entirely agrees with that of Irenæus, except that Anencletus is here called Cletus. Also, besides the mere list of names, Epiphanius shows, in this section, that he had information as to the duration of episcopates, which, it may be presumed, he drew from the same source as that whence he derived the list of names. Now, the chapter in question begins, 'There came *to us* one Marcellina, who had been deceived by these [viz. the Carpocratians], and who perverted many in the times of Anicetus, bishop of Rome, the successor of Pius and of the *above-mentioned*.' Many critics had inferred from the phrase 'to us' that Epiphanius, who is habitually clumsy in his use of his authorities, has here incorporated in his work a sentence taken bodily from an older writer, who must have written in Rome where Marcellina taught her heresy. This inference is confirmed by the phrase 'the above-mentioned,' for in what precedes, Epiphanius had made no mention of Pius or his predecessors: it is afterwards that

* Γενόμενος δὲ ἐν Ῥώμῃ, διαδοχὴν ἐποιησάμην μέχρις Ἀνικήτου, οὗ διάκονος ἦν Ἐλεύθερος. Καὶ παρὰ Ἀνικήτου διαδέχεται Σωτὴρ, μεθ' ὃν Ἐλεύθερος. Ἐν ἑκάστῃ δὲ διαδοχῇ καὶ ἐν ἑκάστῃ πόλει οὕτως ἔχει, ὡς ὁ νόμος κηρύσσει καὶ οἱ προφῆται καὶ ὁ Κύριος. It must be remembered that hostility to the Old Testament was a marked feature of the leading Gnostic sects.

he goes on to explain this sentence by giving a list of Roman bishops. Lipsius had conjectured that Hippolytus was the writer from whom Epiphanius borrowed this sentence; but Bishop Lightfoot puts forward the preferable claims of Hegesippus, who, we know, was in Rome in the time of Anicetus, and whose work contained a list of Roman bishops ending with that prelate. Lightfoot points out a further coincidence, which seems to me enough to remove all doubt as to the correctness of his suggestion. In the same context Epiphanius quotes a passage from the epistle of Clement of Rome, with which epistle he would seem, however, to have no direct acquaintance; for he states that he found the quotation, ἔν τισιν ὑπομνηματισμοῖς. Now, Eusebius (*u. s.*, see also iv. 8) calls the books of Hegesippus ὑπομνήματα (Ἡγήσιππος ἐν πέντε τοῖς εἰς ἡμᾶς ἐλθοῦσιν ὑπομνήμασιν),* and states that the passage already quoted, in which Hegesippus mentions his visit to Rome, followed μετά τινα περὶ τῆς Κλήμεντος πρὸς Κορινθίους ἐπιστολῆς αὐτῷ εἰρημένα. There seems, then, good reason to think that the list given by Irenæus just reproduces for us the list made by Hegesippus some twenty years before, except that the latter list may not improbably have noted durations of episcopates, which Irenæus omits as irrelevant to his purpose. Döllinger, indeed (ii. 150), considers that Irenæus 'certainly did not know Hegesippus's book, or he would have appealed to it against the heretics;' but the coincidence appears to me so close as to exclude the supposition that the authorities are independent; and it is possible that what Irenæus knew was not the book published in the episcopate of Eleutherus by Hegesippus, but the list which he had made, and probably had published, in the episcopate of Anicetus. In any case we arrive at the result, that in any investigation as to the origin of episcopacy, we must take it as a fact that a traveller to Rome, about 160, found the Church ruled by a bishop (Anicetus), and that the Roman

* In another passage (xxix. 4), where Epiphanius quotes ὑπομνηματισμοί as his authority, there is reason to think that Hegesippus is also intended; for the passage relates to a tradition concerning James, our Lord's brother, of whom Hegesippus wrote largely (Euseb., *H. E.*, ii. 23).

Church then believed that, since the Apostles' times, it had been governed by bishops, whose names were then preserved.

To return now to the story of Peter's Roman episcopate, the real inventor of that story was an editor of the Clementine Romance, of which I spoke when lecturing on the New Testament Canon. This work was brought to Rome at the very end of the second or beginning of the third century; and it had then prefixed a letter from Clement to James at Jerusalem, telling how Peter had ordained him, and set him in his own chair of teaching as bishop of Rome. Though the doctrinal teaching of the Clementines was rejected as heretical, the narrative part of the book was readily believed; and in particular this story of Clement's ordination by Peter was felt to be so honourable to the Church of Rome that it was at once adopted there, and has been the traditional Roman account ever since.

But the adoption of this fable sadly perplexed the chronology. For, according to the list of Irenæus, Clement was but the third Roman bishop since the Apostles; and this is confirmed by the internal evidence of Clement's epistle, which, according to the judgment of the best critics, cannot be earlier than about A.D. 97. It was felt that unless Clement could be pushed back to an earlier period, his ordination by Peter would not be chronologically possible. Accordingly, another list of Roman bishops was published,* which puts up Clement to the second, and pushes down Anacletus to the third place. This double list has been very perplexing to historical inquirers; but that the earlier order of Irenæus is really correct is proved by a kind of evidence which I count peculiarly trustworthy. In the Roman Liturgy to this day the names of its first bishops are commemorated in the order of Irenæus, viz., Linus, Anacletus, Clement. If this

* My own opinion is that this innovation was made by Hippolytus, the first in the Roman Church to take up the study of chronology—a science, however, in which he deserves credit for zeal and industry, rather than for skill. His list appears to have been published in the third decade of the third century—a time when the story of Clement's ordination by Peter had come to be fully believed in.

were the original order we can understand its being preserved in the Church of Rome (which was very conservative in liturgical matters), notwithstanding that subsequent chronologers of eminence placed Clement second. But if Clement had been really originally in the second place, it is quite impossible that the name of Anencletus, who is unknown to Church history, should have been placed before him. These Clementine legends have so filled with fable the whole history of St. Peter, that I should even think the story of Peter's coming to Rome at all to be open to question, were it not, as I already said, that no rival Church claims the martyrdom.

The Clementine letter itself, which represents Clement as ordained by Peter, and as succeeding Peter in his chair as chief teacher of the Church, does not expressly speak of Peter as bishop of Rome. Tertullian, in the early part of the third century, had heard and believed the story of Clement's ordination by Peter, for he speaks (*De Præscrip.* 32) of Polycarp having been placed by John over the Church of Smyrna; and Clement, by Peter, over the Church of Rome. But it does not seem to have dawned on Tertullian that Peter was bishop of Rome any more than John was bishop of Smyrna.

We can only give conjectural answers to the questions, Who first counted Peter as bishop of Rome? and, How came the duration of his episcopate to be fixed at twenty-five years? but I will tell you what seems to me most probable. Were it not that there is no better authority for believing Peter to have been bishop of Rome at all than for believing that he came to Rome in the second year of Claudius, many learned Roman Catholics would be glad to be rid of this inconvenient addition to the story. They have found the bringing St. Peter to Rome so early as the year 42 to be attended with chronological difficulties sufficiently perplexing. First, they have had to push back the date of the imprisonment of Peter by Herod, which independent chronologers, with general consent, assign to the year 44. Then they have to bring back Peter to Jerusalem, to be present at the Council of Jerusalem, the proceedings

at which are related (Acts xv.). Then they want him at Rome again, in order that the edict of Claudius mentioned (Acts xviii.) may provide him with a decent excuse for leaving his see, and undertaking those missionary labours in 'Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia,' which appear to have continued so long that non-Episcopalians would be justified in concluding that a Church could get on very well without a bishop. If the commencement of the Roman episcopate could be placed at a later date, the Roman advocates would certainly find their task much easier.

Now Hippolytus was the first Christian scientific chronologer at Rome. Before his time, lists of Roman bishops had been made, and notes of the duration of episcopates had been preserved; but I consider that it was Hippolytus who first put these dates together, with the view of showing how the whole interval between our Lord's time and his own was to be accounted for. My belief is that, in working his way chronologically back, he placed the accession of Linus twenty-six years after our Lord's Ascension. You may take it as a fact that, in the early part of the third century, men had come to find it impossible to conceive the idea of a Church without a bishop. So to the question, What about the twenty-six years before the accession of Linus? Was there no Roman Church then? Hippolytus answered that there was, and that it had St. Peter as its bishop; and my belief is that the duration of twenty-five years was intended to indicate that the Roman Church was founded the year after our Lord's Ascension.*

Now you, perhaps, hardly understand how much chronology has been helped by the use of a fixed era, such as 'Anno Domini,' and how difficult early chronologers who did not use this assistance found it to make their sums total agree when they added together lengths of episcopates, and lengths of emperors' reigns for the same period, the durations being

* Substantially this view is taken by von Döllinger in the passage already cited from his *First Age of the Church*. Elsewhere he seems to think that the twenty-five years was intended to represent the interval between Peter's imprisonment by Herod and his martyrdom.

often given only by whole number of years, without mention of months and days. There is, therefore, nothing to wonder at if, when the calculations of Hippolytus, who was not a skilful computer, were repeated by abler chronologers, they arrived at a somewhat different result; and taking Peter's episcopate at twenty-five years as he had fixed it, instead of getting back to the year after the Ascension, only got back to the second year of Claudius.

As I have quoted Epiphanius just now, there is a peculiar notion of his which it is worth while to mention before concluding this Lecture. Irenæus, as I have said, begins his list of Roman bishops by naming Peter and Paul as the founders of the Church, and as having appointed Linus as Bishop. We have just seen reason to think that Hegesippus also began by naming Peter and Paul. It follows that there is as good reason for calling Paul first bishop of Rome, as for so calling Peter. This was clearly seen by von Döllinger, and was no doubt the reason of his evident reluctance distinctly to call Peter bishop of Rome. He says concerning the passage in Irenæus:—'This makes the regulation of the Roman Church and the appointment of Linus a common act of both apostles; and since then the Roman bishops have been frequently regarded as successors of both. The Roman Church was viewed as inheriting* alike from St. Paul, his prerogative of Apostle of the Gentiles, and from St. Peter, his dignity as foundation of the Church, and as partaking the power of the keys.' And he goes on to say that Eusebius says of Alexander that he formed the fifth bishop in the succession from Peter and Paul, and that he almost always reckons the others 'from the Apostles,' *i.e.* Peter and Paul. He adds that later such expressions are frequent as that the Roman Church is the seat of the two Apostles, or that the power of Rome is founded on Peter and Paul. Now, the admission that the origin of the Roman episcopate is to be traced to Paul as much as to Peter, is equivalent to an admission that neither Apostle was bishop of Rome in the

* But where is the evidence that such an inheritance was bequeathed to Rome any more than to the other Churches where these Apostles respectively laboured?

modern sense of the word. For the ancients never dreamed of two bishops sitting, like two kings of Brentford, in the same chair.

There is just one Father who had the courage to entertain this notion, viz. Epiphanius. In his time (the end of the fourth century) the assertion that Peter had been bishop of Rome had gained general acceptance. But he saw that ancient authorities gave as much justification for counting Paul bishop of Rome as for counting Peter. So he jumped to the conclusion that they had both been bishops: Πέτρος καὶ Παῦλος οἱ ἀπόστολοι αὐτοὶ καὶ ἐπίσκοποι (*Hær.* xxvii. 6). Nay, he elsewhere (lxviii. 7) names it as a peculiarity of Alexandria that 'it never had two bishops, as the other cities had.' Dr. Hatch (*Growth of Church Institutions*, p. 17), with easy faith, accepts this passage as 'decisive,' that 'where there was more than one community in a city, there was, as a rule, more than one bishop.' Those who know their Epiphanius will be amused at hearing anyone quote as 'decisive,' on any subject, the unsupported testimony of an author so uncritical and so rash. But, in this case, 'Epiphanius stands quite alone': 'there is no hint or trace elsewhere of one Church having really had two bishops.' But Döllinger has been successful in tracing how the 'uncritical and credulous Epiphanius' got his view, namely, from the *Apostolic Constitutions* (in their present shape a fourth-century forgery, but) which he accepted as a genuine work of the Apostles, calling it a θεῖος λόγος, and often making use of it. He there found (vii. 46) that St. Peter had appointed Euodius, and St. Paul Ignatius, at Antioch; that at Ephesus St. Paul appointed Timothy, and St. John appointed John. His idea about two bishops at Rome has been already mentioned. But at Alexandria he found Anianus, appointed by St. Mark, named as first bishop; whereas Abilius, appointed by St. Luke, only succeeds on the death of Anianus. Hence Epiphanius derived the fancy that there was something exceptional in the constitution of the Church of Alexandria.

XX.

THE INFANCY OF ROMAN SUPREMACY.

IN a former Lecture I considered the Scripture arguments which have been adduced to prove that the Pope, by divine right, enjoys a Primacy, originally conferred by our Lord on St. Peter, and since then transmitted by succession to the bishops of Rome. It is a useful test of interpretations of Scripture to examine into their antiquity; for there is always an immense presumption against any new-fangled interpretation. I did not neglect to apply this test in the former Lecture, and we found that those passages of the New Testament which Roman Catholics now adduce as establishing the Pope's supremacy were not so understood by the most ancient interpreters of Scripture. But antiquity supplies us with a further test. The passages in question are not of a merely theoretical character, but are supposed to have fixed the constitution of the Christian Church. We may then turn from commentators on Scripture to study the history of the Church, in order to find whether that history has really been such as it must have been if the Romanist interpretation of these texts be the right one.

We know, as a historical fact, that the bishops of Rome, in the course of the Christian centuries, have exercised authority over distant cities. The question at issue is, whether or not that authority dates from the foundation of our religion. If it had been bestowed by our Lord Himself before He left this earth, we should find it exercised from the first, and its rightfulness universally acknowledged. But the contrary is the case. We can trace the history of the growth of the supremacy of the Roman bishop, exactly as in

secular history we can trace the process by which the city of Rome came to exercise imperial dominion. We thus learn that in ecclesiastical matters, as well as in secular, Roman supremacy is a development, not a tradition.

If I desired a summary proof that some at least of the powers which the Popes have exercised in later times were not part of the original prerogatives of the see, I should find it in the oath which every bishop in communion with Rome is now bound to take on his appointment: 'The rights, privileges, and powers of the see of Peter I will, to the best of my ability, extend and promote.' In fact, every bishop of Rome thought he was doing a good thing if he gained for his see some powers and privileges which had not previously belonged to it; and for some centuries he has pledged all over whom he has power to aid him in this laudable endeavour. But one man's powers and privileges cannot be extended except at the expense of those of someone else. If the Popes get more power, independent bishops must have less. The Pope's avowed policy for centuries, therefore, has been one of usurpation; and unless we believe either that all the Roman Catholic bishops have perjured themselves, or that their united efforts, continued for hundreds of years, have failed to augment and promote the rights, dignities, and privileges of the Pope, that prelate must possess some powers now which his predecessors did not enjoy.

But it is quite unnecessary for me to elaborate any proof that the doctrine of Papal Supremacy is a development; for it is fully owned by Newman how faint are the traces of it in the history of the early centuries. I have already told you that the method of his celebrated *Essay on Development* is to make frank confession that neither Scripture nor Tradition will furnish any adequate proof of Roman doctrines. But then he contends that the same confession must be made about doctrines which Roman Catholics and we hold in common, and he puts forward his theory of Development as able to supply the deficiency alike in either case. Thus, then, while he owns (p. 164) that the Pope's Supremacy is a

development, so also, he contends, is Episcopacy. He tells us that St. Ignatius in his Epistles is silent on the subject of the Pope's authority; but that this is because that authority was not, and could not, be in active operation then. While apostles were on earth they exercised the powers both of bishop and Pope. When they were taken away, 'Christianity did not at once break into portions; yet separate localities might begin to be the scene of internal dissensions, and a local arbiter would, in consequence, be wanted.' 'When the Church was thrown on her own resources, first local disturbances gave exercise to bishops, and next ecumenical disturbances gave exercise to Popes.' Newman quotes with assent some of Barrow's topics of proof that Roman supremacy did not exist in the first ages of the Church: namely—(1) that in the writings of the Fathers against the Gnostic heretics of the second century they never allege the sentence of the universal pastor and judge as the most compendious and efficacious method of silencing them; and (2) that heathen writers are quite ignorant of the doctrine, although no point of Christian teaching would be so apt to raise offence and jealousy in pagans, no novelty be more suspicious or startling than this creation of a universal empire over the consciences and religious practices of men, the doctrine also being one that could not but be very conspicuous and glaring in ordinary practice. Newman also assents to Barrow's assertion that 'the state of the most primitive Church did not well admit such a universal sovereignty. For that did consist of small bodies, incoherently situated and scattered about in very distant places, and consequently unfit to be modelled into one political society, or to be governed by one head, especially considering their condition under persecution and poverty. What convenient resort for direction on justice could a few distressed Christians in Egypt, Ethiopia, Parthia, India, Mesopotamia, Syria, Armenia, Cappadocia, and other parts have to Rome?'

Newman is quite consistent with the thesis of his Essay in abandoning Tradition as a basis for the doctrine of Papal supremacy; but the basis of Development on which he attempts to build it is altogether insufficient to constitute any

firm foundation. For the history of Development can only tell us what has been, not what ought to be. The cases of Episcopacy and Papal Supremacy are not parallel; because the former institution dates from apostolic times; and if it can be shown that it was established by apostles, then it can claim a right to permanent continuance. But what claim for permanence can be made on behalf of any form of Church government which confessedly shaped itself at least two or three centuries after the apostles were all dead? Let us liberally grant that an ecclesiastical monarchy was the form of government best adapted to the needs of the Church at the time when, in temporal matters, the whole civilized world was governed by a single ruler; and yet it might be utterly unfit for her requirements in subsequent times when Europe has been broken up into independent kingdoms; and we might be as right now in disowning Papal authority as our ancestors were in submitting to it.

The Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men in temporal matters as well as in spiritual; and we can trace the working of His Providence in guiding events in the one as well as in the other. We can see, for example, how the establishment of the Empire of heathen Rome tended to the furtherance of the Gospel, which never could have spread so rapidly from land to land if it had not been for the facility of intercourse resulting from the Roman peace. Yet no evidence that the Roman Empire was for a time beneficial to the world would show that it was divinely intended to have perpetual duration, or that we now commit any sin in not belonging to it; and if we recognize the guiding hand of God's Providence in the formation of that Empire, we might equally do so in its dissolution. In like manner, a citizen of the United States of America cannot help owning that his country was originally colonized from Great Britain; that the authority of the Sovereign of England was recognized in these States without question for a century or two; that English rule was of the greatest advantage in protecting the infant colonies from enemies, and conferring other benefits on them; yet he would hold that the time came when English rule was no longer

beneficial, and that now the Sovereign of England neither hath nor ought to have authority in the United States. Thus, then, in like manner, the most that the theory of Development could do for the doctrine of Papal Supremacy would be to establish a proof that there have been times when the Pope's supremacy has been beneficial to the Church (or, to speak more cautiously, to the Western Church); that there have been bishops of Rome whose aims were high, whose lives were good, and by whose rule it was at least better to have been guided than by any other likely at the time to have been substituted for it. But surely it will be granted me, without my having need to open up topics from which I have refrained in this course of Lectures, that there have been bishops of Rome whose aims were not high, whose lives were not pure, and whose guidance it was not good to follow. What claim to obedience can such make out? Unless it be held that God's Providence ceased to exert itself three centuries ago, or else that it has merely a local operation, and does not extend to England, Scandinavia, or Germany, the theory of Development will afford as good a justification for the revolt from Papal authority in the sixteenth century as for its rise and growth in the third or fourth and subsequent centuries. And this theory would not prevent a historical student from pronouncing Papal Supremacy to be now a useless or mischievous survival of a form of Church government which has had its day, but which is unsuited to the character of the present age. If, therefore, we are to establish any justification of Papal Supremacy we must fall back on the old sources of proof, Scripture and Tradition; for Newman's proposed substitute, the theory of Development, completely breaks down.

If we once admit Roman Supremacy to have been but a development, there were natural causes in operation which quite sufficiently account for it. The primacy of the bishop of Rome grew naturally out of the precedence accorded to the bishop of the first city of the Empire. Our own experience would tell us that the people of the greatest city can choose their bishop from among a larger number of candi-

dates, that they are likely to be able to secure the services of an abler man, that they can put larger sums of money at his disposal for charitable and other purposes, and altogether make him a much more influential person in the Church than the bishop of a small town. Romanists who refer the supremacy of their see to divine appointment are naturally desirous to throw into the background the human causes of the greatness of the see; yet one example is enough to show how inevitably the temporal greatness of a city leads to the pre-eminence of its bishop. If there be room for controversy as to the causes which gave Rome the first place among Christian sees, there can be no doubt as to the cause which elevated Constantinople to the second place. It was the temporal greatness of the city and nothing else. Byzantium was quite an upstart capital, raised to that dignity only in the fourth century by the will of the Emperor Constantine. It had no Christian historic associations. No Apostle had evangelized the town, or had addressed letters to it, or suffered martyrdom there. It was not even a metropolitan see, but was subject to Heraclea, the very name of which may be unfamiliar to some of you. At the time when Constantinople was made a capital, the recognized order of precedence of the great sees was Rome, Alexandria, Antioch. Yet without a struggle the relations between Constantinople and Heraclea were inverted. Against the further elevation of Constantinople there would naturally be strong objection on the part of Alexandria and Antioch, not to speak of that which might arise from sees formerly fully equal to Byzantium, which was now made the superior. And, besides, the bishop of Rome, sagaciously perceiving that Constantinople, if once admitted to the second place, would be a far more formidable rival for the first place than Alexandria or Antioch could be, resisted the promotion of Constantinople with all his might. But his resistance was in vain, and the title of Constantinople to the second place came in time to be fully admitted at Rome. So if we had not a multitude of other examples in ecclesiastical history, how inevitably a change in the civil position of a city entails a change in its ecclesiastical position, this one

example would put the fact beyond controversy. It is plain that the causes which, in spite of all the disadvantages of a late start, were able when Constantinople became the second city of the Empire to raise its see to the second place, would alone have sufficed to raise to the first place Rome, which for three Christian centuries before the foundation of Constantinople had reigned without a rival as the undisputed capital of the world, the place of resort of visiters from every land, the centre both of commerce and of intellectual activity, the wealthiest of cities, the home of the conquering race who had been accustomed to see the world bow down to them.

One cause there was which might have prevented Rome from taking the first place among Christian Churches—I mean the superior claims of Jerusalem, which had been the cradle of Christianity, the place whence the missionaries had issued forth who had evangelized the world. Accordingly in one of the earliest forms of that Clementine romance, of which I had before occasion to speak to you (a form, indeed, which I believe to be earlier than the introduction of Clement into the story), James, bishop of Jerusalem, is represented as head of the Christian Church; Peter has been sent abroad on a mission by James, but is bound to render him periodical reports of his progress; and the forgery called the Clementine Homilies purports to be a report of the discourses of Peter, whether to heathen or to heretics, sent by the missionary Apostle for the information of his ecclesiastical superior. But the destruction of Jerusalem swept away all danger of rivalry with Rome from that quarter. The city might have recovered its overthrow by Titus, but the formidable rebellion in the reign of Hadrian was visited by severer penalties. Jews were utterly banished from the spot, and a Gentile city was founded there, called, after the Emperor, Ælia; which no circumcised person was allowed to enter. Ælia was not at first regarded as identical with Jerusalem, or as heir to its privileges. In the list of bishops of Jerusalem given by Eusebius (and as I believe taken by him from his predecessor as a historian, Hegesippus) two distinct series are recognized—that of the bishops of the circumcision, who presided

over the ancient city; and that of the Gentile bishops, who ruled over Ælia. In the constitution of the Christian Churches, so late as the Council of Nicæa, Jerusalem had no metropolitan prerogative; and in Palestine, as elsewhere, the rule prevailed that the city highest in civil rank was also highest in ecclesiastical. Jerusalem was therefore subordinate to Cæsarea, the capital of Palestine, whose bishop, Eusebius the historian, took a leading part at Nicæa, and was honoured with much confidence by Constantine. But shortly after that Council, the fashion of pilgrimages was set by the Emperor's mother Helena, whose visit, leading to what has been happily called the Invention of the Cross, made Jerusalem a centre of resort for Christians, and gave it a place in their esteem which it had not previously enjoyed. At the third General Council, you will remember, John of Antioch was on the losing side. Juvenal of Jerusalem, an impudent and ambitious man, was on the winning one, and he actually attempted not only to elevate his see to metropolitan rank, but to place it above that of Antioch. The latter attempt had only a momentary chance of success; but Jerusalem did become relieved of subordination to Cæsarea, and was placed in a position next below Antioch. However, my present purpose is to point out that Rome had no rivalry from Jerusalem to encounter, and that there was no other city which could claim to have communicated to Rome her knowledge of the Gospel. Rome had received a letter from the Apostle Paul, and that Apostle had taught there for at the very least two years. It is not recorded in inspired history that Peter also visited Rome, and that both Apostles suffered martyrdom there; but I think the testimony to these things is enough to warrant belief in them, and certain it is that the early Church did believe in them without doubt; so that there was nothing to detract from the superiority which its temporal greatness gave to Rome, on the ground of its being inferior to any rival in closeness of relation to the first preachers of the Gospel.

The considerations I have brought before you only establish for Rome a precedence of honour and dignity, though it is

well, in all our investigations, to bear in mind that this honourable precedence is a matter about which there has not been, and need not be, any dispute. Rome's right to govern other Churches is quite another matter, and was only gained after hard struggles and by slow degrees. Her first interference with other Churches was of the most honourable kind—of a kind that no Church is likely strongly to object to, namely, sending them money, or otherwise conferring benefits on them. There was no Church, some of whose leading members would not have occasion to visit Rome, and be able on their return to tell of hospitality and good offices received from the Christians there. By merely suspending such friendly relations, Rome had it in her power to inflict a severe penalty on any Church. But that wealthy Church not only exercised generous hospitality to strangers who visited it, but was bountiful of gifts to poorer Churches. An interesting early example accidentally becomes known to us through a fragment of a letter written about 170 by Dionysius, bishop of Corinth, to the Church of Rome. Eusebius, who preserves it, remarks that the practice of the Roman Church which Dionysius commends had been continued down to the Diocletian persecution of his own time. Dionysius writes, in acknowledgment of a donation sent from Rome:—'This has been your custom from the beginning to bestow benefits in various ways on all the brethren, and send supplies to many Churches in different cities, here refreshing the poverty of the needy, and in the mines ministering to the wants of the brethren there confined. In the supplies which you have been in the habit of sending from the beginning, you Romans keep up the traditional custom of the Romans, which your blessed bishop Soter has not only maintained but increased, both administering the bounty which is sent to the saints, and comforting with blessed words the brethren who go up to your city, as an affectionate father his children' (Euseb. *H. E.* iv. 23). Dionysius adds the interesting information that Soter's letter had come just in time to be read at their Sunday service, and promises that it should continue so to be read for their edification from

time to time, in the same way as the previous letter of the Church of Rome written by the hands of Clement. There is no reason to think that there was anything special in the relations between Rome and Corinth, or that this instance, the knowledge of which chance has preserved for us, is other than a fair specimen of the munificent liberality of the wealthy Roman Christians to foreign Churches. A confirmation is given in another fragment preserved by Eusebius of a letter of the Alexandrian Dionysius. Writing to Stephen of Rome, and mentioning different provinces, he says:—'Syria and Arabia, to which you sent help on different occasions' (Euseb., *H. E.* vii. 5); and, oddly enough, a third example is connected with the name of a third Dionysius, who was bishop of Rome. St. Basil, writing to Damasus of Rome (*Ep.* 70), gratefully calls to memory how in former days this Dionysius had sent agents to his province of Cappadocia to redeem captives. Remember now that all communications of the Church of Rome with foreign Churches were made through their bishop. We claim no divine right for the English episcopate to rule over colonial Churches; yet different colonies have acknowledged the Archbishop of Canterbury as their metropolitan. If ever we see a native episcopate in India, who can doubt that the opinion of the English episcopate would have overpowering weight with it, even though England has no divine claim to rule India in spiritual matters? But suppose that all the money subscribed in England for foreign or colonial missions was administered by the Archbishop of Canterbury; that there was no Church Missionary Society, or Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, or Colonial and Continental, or such like, but that the English Primate was the one man to be appealed to whenever any good work abroad was in need of help, do you think that in such a case the fact that that prelate exercised commanding influence would require any elaborate explanation?

The fable of Peter's Roman episcopate at once supplied the bishops of Rome with an ecclesiastical justification for a precedence which, on political grounds, it was inevitable for them to exercise. This gain of dignity by historical associations

operated more strongly in favour of Rome, because this was exactly the point in which its most formidable rival, Constantinople, was deficient. This upstart capital was, by the favour of the Emperor, put over the heads of ancient sees, which were far better able than Byzantium to connect themselves with the Apostles. Now the Sovereign can give rank, but he cannot give pedigree. He may make a nobleman, but he cannot give him old blood. In the desire of Rome to keep down Constantinople, and prevent her from coming into rivalry with her, she had sympathy from Alexandria and other great eastern sees, which had been long accustomed to yield precedence to Rome, but had no mind to see a new superior placed over their heads. And, in particular, these sees sympathized with Rome when she tried to alter the ground of her priority from what it had been before, and to claim precedence not because of her political greatness, but because of her historical connexion with the Apostles. For, according to that rule, Constantinople ranked below Alexandria and Antioch as much as below Rome.

It is rather amusing how careful the bishops of Rome thenceforward became to protest against the rank of sees being made to depend on the civil rank of their cities. Thus, Innocent I. writes :—'It has not seemed fitting that the Church of God should change her course according to the changes of the necessities of this world' (*Ep.* 18, Mansi, iii. 1055). But the fact is that Church history swarms with examples of changes of this kind; for the logic of facts is too strong for theories. The example that first occurs to me owes its interest to its being an incident in the life of a great man, St. Basil. In 375, when the Emperor Valens divided the province of Cappadocia into two, the bishop of Tyana, which was now raised to the rank of a capital, at once assumed that he was elevated to the rank of a metropolitan, was released from all subordination to the old capital, Cæsarea, and was entitled to claim obedience from the minor sees of his half of the province. He took on him to assemble synods of bishops, and to seize the revenues which the suffragan bishops sent to the principal see. This led to some

distressing disputes, in which Gregory Nazianzen was forced to take a share; but practically the victory remained with the bishop of Tyana. And at Chalcedon it was made a canon that the ecclesiastical should follow the civil divisions.

I proceed now to examine into the history of the early Church, and to inquire whether in their controversies they recognized the bishop of Rome as their ruler, teacher, and doctor. Confessedly, the opinion of him who was the leading bishop of the Church had great weight in every dispute; but the question now is, whether his decision was final, and whether, when Rome had spoken, the cause was finished.

At the outset of the inquiry, in one of the earliest of Christian uninspired writings, the epistle of Clement of Rome, we find an example, to which Romanists gladly appeal, of an interference of the Church of Rome with a distant Church. The object of the letter was to heal a schism in the Corinthian Church; and the Romans use an urgent, and to some it has seemed an imperious tone, in addressing their Corinthian brethren. They exhort the offenders to submit 'not to them but to the will of God' (§ 56):—'Receive our counsel,' they write, 'and ye shall have no cause of regret' (§ 58). 'But if certain persons should be disobedient unto the words spoken by God through us, let them understand that they will entangle themselves in no slight transgression and danger; but we shall be guiltless of this sin' (§ 59). 'Ye will give us great joy and gladness if ye render obedience unto the things written by us through the Holy Spirit, and root out the unrighteous anger of your jealousy, according to the entreaty we have made for peace and concord in this letter' (§ 63).

Before we pass a judgment on these sentences, it is necessary to know the circumstances which gave occasion for them; for it is never safe to say that any language is too strong, without knowing what has occurred to justify it. Strange to say, the account of the transaction most favourable to the Roman pretensions is that given by a Scotch Presbyterian. Dr. Cunningham (*Growth of the Church*, p. 53) states that the occasion of Clement's letter was that the

Corinthians 'had, with much bitterness and bad blood, dismissed some of their presbyters; when the Roman Church, to whom, perhaps, the paid off* presbyters had appealed, wrote to remonstrate.' And he adds that 'this venerable document clearly proves that, at the period when it was written—probably towards the end of the first century—the Churches of Rome and Corinth were under the rule of presbyter-bishops, with a very limited jurisdiction, and subject to dismissal from their office at the caprice of the people.'

Now, if this were really the constitution of the Church in the first century, the Corinthians acted fully within their rights in cashiering officers who had ceased to be acceptable to them; and the interference of the Roman Church is inexplicable, unless it possessed, or at least claimed, the right of controlling the independent action of foreign Churches. But it is remarkable that there is no trace in the letter itself of any pretension of the kind. Not a hint is given that the question of deposing presbyters was one on which Rome ought to have been consulted, or one which it had any right to review. It is not stated that there had been any appeal to Rome on the part of the displaced presbyters, but only that the transactions at Corinth had become notorious, and had brought great discredit on their Church (*ὥστε τὸ σεμνὸν καὶ πᾶσιν ἀνθρώποις ἀξιαγάπητον ὄνομα ὑμῶν μεγάλως βλασφημηθῆναι*). This letter claims no superiority for the Roman Church; and if the writer declares that its remonstrances cannot be disregarded without sin, it is because of his conviction of the enormity of the evil which called them forth. For, far from thinking with Dr. Cunningham that it lies within the discretion of a Church to turn off its presbyters when so disposed, he treats the deposition of presbyters, against whom no misconduct had been alleged, as a mon-

* It is a pity that Dr. Cunningham did not quote in full the otherwise unknown authority whence he derived this feature; for it would be interesting to know how much these presbyters, on being dismissed, received as composition for their annuities. Also, since the same authority, no doubt, told something as to the fees payable in the Roman ecclesiastical courts in the first century, we should be enabled to tell how far the sum they received would go in defraying the costs of an appeal to Rome, which, in later times at least, were considerable.

strous and unheard-of thing. In the view of later times, what had taken place at Corinth might be described as feuds or dissensions; but, in the view of the writer, rebellion against the authority of the duly-appointed presbyters was 'a detestable and impious sedition, madly stirred up by a few headstrong and self-willed persons' (*μιαρᾶς καὶ ἀνοσίου στάσεως ἦν ὀλίγα πρόσωπα προπετῆ καὶ αὐθάδη ὑπάρχοντα εἰς τοσοῦτον ἀπονοίας ἐξέκαυσαν*). He argues that it is necessary to the well-being of every society that duly-constituted order should be respected; and (c. 44) that the order constituted in the Christian society owed its origin to apostolic appointment. He has no other terms of peace to counsel than that those who had rebelled should penitently submit to lawful authority, even going into voluntary exile, if, for the sake of peace, that should be necessary. Such a letter as this could clearly not be regarded as an attempt by Rome to domineer over provincial Churches. On the contrary, the constituted authorities of every Church would be grateful for the moral support generously given them by the Church of the chief city; while the general acknowledgment of the principle, contended for in the letter, of the stability of the sacred office would do much to increase the reputation of the Church which had been its successful champion. Even those whose conduct was censured in this letter could take no offence at its tone, which is only that of the loving remonstrance which any Christian is justified in offering to an erring brother.

But it is necessary to remark that Clement's letter is in the name, not of the bishop of Rome, but of the Church of Rome. Clement's name is not once mentioned. It is from independent sources (the earliest, Dionysius of Corinth, has been just mentioned) we learn that Clement was the writer; but from the letter itself we should not so much as discover that Rome had any bishop. 'The later Roman theory supposes that the Church of Rome derives all its authority from the bishop of Rome, as the successor of St. Peter. History inverts the relation, and shows that, as a matter of fact, the power of the bishop of Rome was built upon the power of

the Church of Rome. It was originally a primacy, not of the episcopate, but of the Church.'*

All through the second century this subordination of the bishop to the Church continues. The bishop only addresses foreign Churches as the mouthpiece of his Church. We have the letter already referred to, written by Dionysius of Corinth, (about 170) in the name of his Church, addressed to the Church of Rome, and acknowledging the benefactions sent through their bishop Soter. The letter to which he replies had been written, not in Soter's name, but in that of his Church, as appears from the use of the plural number. 'To-day we kept the Lord's holy day, on which we read *your* letter; by which we shall be able to be constantly admonished, reading it from time to time, in the same manner as your former letter to us, written by the hands of Clement.†

At the very end of the century, the proceedings with which the name of Victor is associated, taken with a view of excluding Quartodecimans from communion, were taken, not in the bishop's own name, but in that of his Church. There is so far an advance in the prominence of the bishop, that Victor does not suppress his own name as did Clement; but still the letter is not his, but that of his Church.‡ And the plural number is still used in the reply of Polycrates, in which also it is implied that the request that he should take the opinion of the neighbouring bishops had been made in the name of the Church, not the bishop, of Rome.§

What has been said as to the fact that in the first century the importance of the bishop of Rome was merged in that of his Church receives singular confirmation from the Ignatian Epistles. Among non-canonical writers, Ignatius is the first

* Lightfoot's *Clement*, p. 254.

† *τὴν σήμερον οὖν Κυριακὴν ἁγίαν ἡμέραν διηγάγομεν, ἐν ᾗ ἀνέγνωμεν ὑμῶν τὴν ἐπιστολήν· ἣν ἔξομεν ἀεί ποτε ἀναγινώσκοντες νουθετεῖσθαι, ὡς καὶ τὴν προτέραν ἡμῖν διὰ Κλήμεντος γραφεῖσαν* (Euseb., *H. E.* iv. 23).

‡ [*φέρεται γραφὴ*] *τῶν ἐπὶ Ῥώμης ὁμοίως ἄλλη περὶ τοῦ αὐτοῦ ζητήματος, ἐπίσκοπον Βίκτορα δηλοῦσα.*

§ *Ἐδυνάμην δὲ τῶν ἐπισκόπων τῶν συμπαρόντων μνημονεῦσαι, οὓς ὑμεῖς ἠξιώσατε μετακληθῆναι ὑπ' ἐμοῦ, καὶ μετεκαλεσάμην* (Euseb., *H. E.* v. 24).

distinct witness to the episcopal form of Church government. His letters to the Asiatic Churches are full of exhortations to obey the bishop and to be united to him; but in his letter to the Church of Rome no hint is given that there is a bishop entitled to the obedience (not to say of foreign Christians, but even) of his own people. No salutation is sent to the bishop; and, in short, we should not discover from this letter that there was a bishop of Rome. I am not prepared to adopt the inference some have drawn, viz. that episcopacy was a form of Church Government which developed itself first in Asia Minor, and which, when Ignatius wrote, had not yet extended itself to Rome. But there seems reason to think that the bishop of Rome was then only concerned with domestic government, and that Ignatius had not even heard his name. On the other hand, the dignity of the Church of Rome is fully acknowledged in this letter. It is addressed to the Church 'which presides in the place of the country of the Romans.'* The best commentary on these words is afforded by Tertullian, whose own language may possibly have been suggested by them (*De Praescr.* 36): 'ecclesias apostolicas apud quas ipsae adhuc cathedrae apostolorum *suis locis praesident.*' Thus each of the Apostolic Churches is regarded as presiding in its own district; so that though it would cost us nothing to admit a pre-eminence of the Church of the world's metropolis over all other Churches, the language appears to limit the presidency to the Roman district.

While on this subject, I must not omit to discuss another early testimony to the eminence of the Roman Church. I have already (p. 352) mentioned how Church writers refuted the Gnostic pretence to the possession of secret apostolic traditions, by tracing the successions of their own bishops up to the Apostles, and thus showing that it was in their own Churches that the genuine apostolic tradition must have been handed down. Irenæus, who uses this argument (III. 3), says, that because it would be too long in a work like his to enumerate the successions in all the Churches, he will content

* ἥτις προκάθηται ἐν τόπῳ χωρίου Ῥωμαίων.

himself with giving the succession of bishops in the Church of Rome: 'Ad hanc enim ecclesiam propter potentiorem principalitatem necesse est omnem convenire ecclesiam (hoc est, eos qui sunt undique fideles) in qua semper, ab his qui sunt undique, conservata est ea quae est ab Apostolis traditio.' The passage has only been preserved in a Latin translation, and commentators have differed very much in their attempts to restore the Greek. Some Romanist writers have understood the first clause to mean that it is the duty of every Church to conform to that of Rome; but it has been pointed out with perfect justice that 'necesse est' is not the Latin equivalent for δεῖ, which would be rendered 'oportet,' but for ἀνάγκη; and expresses not moral obligation but natural necessity. When our Lord said (Matt. xviii. 7), ἀνάγκη γὰρ ἐλθεῖν τὰ σκάνδαλα, he did not mean that it was a moral duty that offences should come. Making this correction, however, those who understand the clause to mean that other Churches would be sure to be found agreeing with the Church of Rome, have differed among themselves as to the reason given, 'propter potentiorem principalitatem'; some restoring the Greek so as to find in these words a claim founded on the civil greatness of Rome, others on the antiquity of the Church. These differences I need not discuss, because I feel no doubt that Grabe is right in considering that the words 'convenire ad' are not Latin for 'agree with,' but for 'resort to,' and that 'undique' is not to be taken as meaning no more than 'ubique'; so that the meaning of Irenæus is 'Rome is, on account of its civil greatness, a place to which every Church must resort: that is to say, every Church does not come thither officially, but Christians cannot help coming to the city from the Churches in every part of the world. We have no need, then, to examine the apostolic tradition of these Churches in their respective lands. We can learn it from their members to be found in Rome, who, being in communion with the Roman Church, must agree with it in doctrine; and thus the apostolic tradition preserved in the capital has been preserved not by native Romans only, but by the faithful collected in

the city from every part of the world.' Understanding the passage thus, it is seen to have no relevance to modern controversies. I am surprised that Grabe's explanation has not been more generally adopted,* because it seems to me the only one which brings out the force of the parenthesis 'hoc est qui sunt undique fideles,' and which gives a meaning to 'in qua,' by which Harvey is so much puzzled that he wants to translate it 'whereas.'

I come now to what is regarded by many as the first mild attempt at Papal aggression—the proposal of bishop Victor at the very end of the second century to excommunicate the Asiatic Quartodecimans. I have on a former occasion (*Introduction to N. T.*, p. 43) called your attention to the predominance of the Greek element in the early Roman Church; and in particular to the fact that we have in Victor a bishop with a Latin name succeeding to a line of bishops whose names (such as Anicetus, Soter, Eleutherus), in the vast majority of cases, indicate a Greek origin. Hence it has been thought that Victor's arrogance may be accounted for by the fact that he belongs to a time when the Roman Church was no longer that of a foreign colony in the great city, but had now a predominance of native Romans, ruled by a bishop of their own conquering race. But it seems to me that there are considerations which tend to mitigate any harsh judgment we might be disposed to pass on Victor.†

I think the young student of Church history is apt to be a little scandalized on learning that there were such warm

* He is followed by Neander, who has an admirable note (*Kirchengeschichte*, i. 210), but was perversely misunderstood by Stieren, who says, 'miror Neandrum, qui sequitur Grabium, illud "convenire" de conventibus legatorum ex omnibus ecclesiis Romam missorum interpretari.' Of course Grabe and Neander were not thinking of embassies to the Church of Rome, but of the necessary recourse of Christians to the capital on account of civil business. Grabe quotes what Gregory Nazianzen (*Orat.* 32) says of Constantinople: εἰς ἣν τὰ πανταχόθεν ἄκρα συντρέχει; and the 9th Canon of the Council of Antioch: ἐν τῇ μητροπόλει πανταχόθεν συντρέχειν πάντας τοὺς πράγματα ἔχοντας. Neander adds a still more apposite quotation from Athenaeus (i. 36), who describes Rome as an epitome of the world in which every city is found represented.

† Hippolytus, who, it must be owned, had an object to serve in his eulogium, describes Victor as a kind-hearted man (εὔσπλαγχνος). (*Haer. Ref.* ix. 12.)

controversies in the second century on the question of the proper day for the celebration of Easter. Surely, he thinks, this is a matter of no importance. Might not any day have been selected by common consent? or if there had been any difficulty about this, might not different Churches without offence keep their Easter on different days? Yet we have experience enough among ourselves what warmth of feeling can be stirred by ritual peculiarities indifferent in themselves, but supposed to indicate objectionable tendencies in those who adopt them. In the great majority of Irish churches any attempt to assimilate our ritual practice to Romish usage would give the greatest offence; and the clergyman who should introduce the innovation would plead in vain that the change was an improvement, or that it only concerned matters of indifference. Now in the second century the contest with Judaism was as pressing as the contest with Romanism is among ourselves; and in the West natural suspicions were excited of the orthodoxy of a man who in place of keeping his Easter on the day observed by the Church, wished to celebrate it on the day of the Passover of the unbelieving Jews. For these reasons the Quartodeciman usage would naturally be disliked in the West; yet still as long as it was merely known to be the practice of distant Churches, it was not difficult to tolerate it. But as I have already explained (p. 276), the case was altered when a presbyter at Rome denounced the usage of his own Church as un-apostolic, and as one to which a Christian could not with a good conscience conform. Then it might well seem time that diversity should be put an end to; and I have pointed out that this was not an attempt to impose a Roman peculiarity on the rest of the Christian world, but that Victor commenced by writing to the leading bishops, asking each to assemble his neighbours and report to him their practice. It was armed with this evidence that Quartodecimanism was only a local peculiarity, that he called on the Asiatic Churches to conform to the usage of the rest of the world on pain of being excommunicated. According to my view of Christian duty, the matter in dispute was one in which a

local Church is not justified in resisting the rest of the Church universal; and I think the Asiatic Churches ought to have given way, rather than break unity. Yet they could plead a tradition for their practice reaching, as they believed, up to the Apostle John; and when I bear in mind that the Christian Easter is but a commemoration of events which happened at the Jewish Passover season, I find no difficulty in believing that St. John's practice may have been to hold the Christian feast on the same day as the Jewish. But though I can also think it possible that other Apostles may have celebrated differently, and though I hold, moreover, that it lies within the competence of the Church, for reason that seems to her good, to deviate from Apostolic usage in ritual matters, yet I cannot be surprised that these views were not shared by the Asiatic Christians of the second century, and that they held themselves bound, in defiance of threats, to adhere to the traditional practice of their Churches.

A few words may be necessary to explain what was meant by the threat of excommunication which was used against them: it meant a suspension of those friendly relations which I have already described (p. 275) as existing between the different Churches which all regarded themselves as members of one great community. That one Church should break these relations with another did not necessarily imply any claim of superiority. If the Sovereign of England were to dismiss the Russian ambassador, it would be a token of hostility, but would not imply any claim of superiority over the Sovereign of Russia. Even before the Pope lost his temporal dominions, the Crown of England refused to hold diplomatic intercourse with him, yet did not thereby show that it counted him as an inferior. Nevertheless, any Church would feel it as a most severe penalty were Rome to break communion with her. She would thereby lose the good offices of the Church most powerful in influence and in money. Her members, on visiting the city which strangers had most occasion to frequent, would find themselves, no matter how high office they had held at home, treated as aliens to the Christian community. Added to the practical

inconvenience would be the stigma of an exclusion which, according to the general feeling of Christians, ought not to be inflicted but for grave cause. This same general feeling, however, would make one Church slow to break communion with another; for the result of such an attempt, if unsupported, would be, instead of isolating that other, to isolate themselves. Accordingly, the threat by which it had been expected to bring the Asiatic Churches into conformity was one of separation, not from the Roman Church merely, but from the whole society of Christian Churches. But the attempt to carry out the threat was frustrated by the resistance of Irenæus, who wrote not only a letter of sharp remonstrance to Victor himself, but wrote also to several other bishops, urging that whole Churches of God ought not to be separated from communion on account of an ancient custom, and pointing out that the matter in dispute was one on which differences had previously not been allowed to interrupt communion; citing in particular the fact that Anicetus of Rome and Polycarp, though unable to agree on this subject, had remained in close communion with each other. The result of these remonstrances seems to have been that the attempt to excommunicate the Asiatics was abandoned; for we find during the next century no trace of interruption of communion; and the suppression of Quartodecimanism was only effected by the Council of Nicæa, which could speak in the name of the universal Church with an authority possessed by no single bishop.

I think that if we put the Romish controversy out of our heads, we shall have no difficulty in sympathizing with all the parties in this transaction. We cannot wonder that Victor should have been anxious to obtain uniformity of practice, and that he should have thought that object attainable through pressure put by the general body of Christians on a small number of dissentients. We can sympathize also with the unexpected tenacity with which the Asiatics held to a usage which they believed to be Apostolic, and we can sympathize still more heartily with the counsels of peace offered by Irenæus. But we should not have been allowed to put

the Romish controversy out of our heads if the parts of Victor and Irenæus had been interchanged. Suppose it had been Irenæus who had rashly broken communion with the Asiatic Churches; suppose that Victor had then written a letter to Irenæus, sharply rebuking him,* and had written also to other bishops, warning them not to separate from those who had been unwarrantably excommunicated; and suppose that in consequence of this action of Victor's the threatened schism had been averted, would not that have been paraded as a decisive proof of Papal Supremacy? and certainly it would be one far stronger than any which, as things are, early Church history can furnish.

In my opinion this was not the first time on which the Gallic Church had come forward to defend the independence of the Asiatic Churches; but the passage which I have in my mind is one which has been differently understood. In the Montanist controversy the chief subject of difference was that the Montanists regarded certain women as prophets, and reverenced their utterances as inspired by God's Spirit, while the local bishops considered them to be under the influence of demoniacal possession, and even attempted to exorcise the evil spirit which possessed them.† Now Eusebius (v. 3), in relating the events of the year 177, tells that the brethren in Gaul then drew up a judgment of their own on this Montanist question, a judgment pious and most orthodox, in which were also set forth letters which the martyrs in the great persecution of that year had written while yet in prison to the brethren in Asia and Phrygia, and, moreover, to Eleutherus, the then bishop of Rome, pleading on behalf of the peace of the Churches. From the last phrase it has been very commonly inferred that these letters were an unsuccessful attempt to avert the schism which actually took

* *φέρονται δὲ καὶ αἱ τούτων φωναὶ πληκτικώτερον καθαπτομένων τοῦ Βίκτορος.* (Euseb. *H. E.* v. 24.)

† I consider that it was this way of testing prophets which is forbidden in the *Didaché*, xi. 7: *πάντα προφήτην λαλοῦντα ἐν πνεύματι οὐ πειράσετε οὐδὲ διακρινεῖτε· πᾶσα γὰρ ἁμαρτία ἀφεθήσεται, αὕτη δὲ ἡ ἁμαρτία οὐκ ἀφεθήσεται.* To offer the indignity of exorcism to one really inspired of God's Spirit might naturally be regarded as a sin against the Holy Ghost.

place, and that they had pleaded for the retention of the Montanists in the Church, by either acknowledging the inspiration of their prophets, or at least leaving that an open question. But I cannot believe that Eusebius would have characterized such advice as pious and orthodox; for a little later (*c.* 14) he describes these Montanist prophets as poisonous serpents sent against the Church by the devil, the hater of all good, who was determined to leave no form of injury untried. And I conceive the object of the letter to Eleutherus to have been to impress on him the propriety of not going behind the judgment passed on these pretenders by the bishops on the spot, since any contrary course would be a breach of the 'peace of the Churches.'

In the third century the importance of the bishop of Rome increases; yet even so late as the episcopate of Callistus (A. D. 217-222), it seems to me that it still depends on his being able to speak in the name of his Church. Hippolytus, who was an adversary of Callistus, reproaches him (*Ref. Haer.* ix. 12) for the laxity of his discipline. There is every reason to think that this was the same prelate whose decision, that persons excommunicated on account of adultery might be admitted to penance and restoration, gave rise to Tertullian's treatise, *De Pudicitia*, in which the rigorist view is strongly maintained, that such persons ought never in this life to be readmitted to the Church. It used to be thought that Zephyrinus was the bishop in question; but the only ground for that opinion was a mistaken belief that the life, or at least the literary activity, of Tertullian had not continued beyond his episcopate. The *De Pudicitia* belongs to the latest period of Tertullian's life, in which he had come to formal separation from the Church. Hippolytus gives no hint that the laxity of Callistus had received any sanction from his predecessor.

Be this, however, as it may, what we are here concerned with is, that in discussing whether adulterers can be readmitted to communion, Tertullian, after considering several other texts of Scripture, comes to the texts, 'On this rock will I build my Church,' 'I have given thee the keys of the

Kingdom of Heaven,' 'Whatsoever thou shalt bind or loose on earth shall be bound or loosed in heaven.' Now, since at the time this tract of Tertullian was written the story that Clement had been ordained by Peter had come to be received belief at Rome, it would not have surprised me if Callistus had already made the claim for the bishop of Rome to be heir to Peter's prerogatives. But it is remarkable that while Tertullian altogether denies that it lies within the competence of the bishop of Rome to give absolution to an adulterer, his whole argument shows plainly that no claim of the kind had been made for the bishop personally, but only for his Church, or rather for every Church which could claim like relationship with Peter ('ad omnem ecclesiam Petri propinquam'). If a personal claim had been made for the bishop, Tertullian would completely play into his adversary's hands; for what he takes pains to maintain is, that the powers described in the verses in St. Matthew were not conferred on the Church, but on Peter personally (see p. 335). The absence of any claim for the bishop is so striking, that two learned Roman Catholics (Cardinal Orsi and Morcelli) have refused to believe that Tertullian's controversy was with a bishop of Rome at all. It must have been a bishop of Carthage. If he was addressing a bishop of Rome, argues Orsi, Tertullian would not have said, 'Thou imaginest that to thee also, that is to every Church united with Peter, this power has been committed,' but he would have said, 'To thee who boastest that thou dost sit on the seat of Peter, and to thy Church founded by him.' But since Tertullian sarcastically calls his adversary 'Pontifex Maximus,' and, 'Episcopus Episcoporum,' it cannot well be doubted that he had a bishop of Rome in view; and Orsi's argument simply proves that the bishop of Rome in the days of Tertullian had not made the claims which were afterwards advanced by his successors.

In this controversy we are disposed to sympathize with the clemency of Callistus rather than with the rigour of his critics, Tertullian and Hippolytus. But since I have spoken of the controversy between Callistus and Hippolytus, I must tell you all that is known about it, although the case is not one on which I lay stress, in a controversial point of view; for

I take the side of the bishop of Rome against his assailant. The story is an interesting one; and as it has only comparatively recently come to light, so that it is not to be found in the older text-books, it is fitting that I should give you some account of it. A book known as the *Philosophumena* had been long included among the works of Origen, though learned men had given reasons for thinking that Origen could not have been really the author. It was but the introduction to a larger work, the greater part of which has been since recovered in a MS. brought from Mount Athos to Paris, and published at Oxford in 1851, still under the name of Origen's *Philosophumena*. On the publication of the whole, however, it became abundantly plain that the work was not Origen's, for the author appears to claim to be a bishop, and also to have taken a leading part in the affairs of the Church of Rome. The almost unanimous opinion of the learned (whether Roman Catholic, Church of England, or Rationalistic) is, that the book, whose proper title is a 'Refutation of all Heresies,' is the work of Hippolytus, who has been honoured as a saint, and who had been known as one of the most learned members of the Church of Rome between 200 and 235. There are still one or two learned men who do not think the authorship fully proved; but I have examined the question myself, and consider that it is beyond all doubt. Among the heresies refuted in this book is one which denied the distinct personality of the Father and the Son, so that these were said to be merely different names given to the same divine being, according as he existed in different relations or different ways of manifestation. Hence its promoters have been called Patripassians, the consequence having been deduced from their teaching (whether they themselves expressly asserted it or not), that it was the Father who suffered on the Cross. It was nearly the same heresy as that which afterwards became notorious under the name of Sabellianism. We learn from Hippolytus's contemporary, Tertullian, that Praxeas, who introduced this heresy at Rome, had also made himself conspicuous by his opposition to Montanism, and so, probably by his admitted orthodoxy on one point, gained a more indulgent hearing for his erroneous teaching on another. This newly-discovered

writing, in refuting the Patripassian doctrine, stigmatizes as patrons of that heresy Zephyrinus and Callistus, who occupied the see of Rome between 202 and 223, who had always hitherto held an unblemished reputation in the Church, and are entered in the Roman breviary as martyrs. Zephyrinus is dealt with with comparative gentleness. He is described as an illiterate and covetous man, very much under the influence of Callistus, and partly inveigled, partly corrupted, by him to give his episcopal patronage to the Noetians. But with Callistus no terms are kept. He is said to have been originally a slave of an influential Christian in Cæsar's household. Under his master's patronage he set up as a banker, and was entrusted with large deposits by the widows and brethren. These Callistus embezzled, and became bankrupt. He attempted to run away, but was overtaken, and, failing in an attempt to commit suicide, was brought back, and sent by his master to the *pistrinum*. After a time he was released, on the intercession of some who thought that if he were set free he might discover the embezzled money. But this he could not do, and being watched, and unable to run away again, he devised a desperate plan to restore his credit among the Christians. He went into the Jewish synagogue, and disturbed their worship, for which he was beaten, and brought before the prefect. His master hastened to the tribunal, and begged the prefect not to believe that he was a Christian, as he was only seeking an occasion of death, having embezzled much money; but this was thought a mere subterfuge for the extrication of the accused, and Callistus was scourged, and sent to the mines in Sardinia. Some time after, Marcia, the favourite concubine of the Emperor Commodus, who had strong sympathies with the Christians, the eunuch who brought her up being a Christian priest, was able to obtain an order for the release of the Christians in these mines, and applied to Pope Victor for their names. But he, knowing the circumstances, did not include the name of Callistus in the list. However, Callistus so earnestly wept and besought the bearer of the release, that the latter, being a kind-hearted man, took the responsibility of adding the

name of Callistus to the list. Victor, we are told, was distressed at the return of Callistus, but contented himself with banishing him to Antium. After Victor's death, Callistus succeeded in ingratiating himself with his successor, Zephyrinus; and in the Patripassian disputes, he tried to gain the favour of both parties, with the orthodox professing orthodoxy, and with the Noetians, Noetianism. He ultimately devised a new theory, by which he endeavoured to make a compromise, and steer a middle course between the teaching of Hippolytus and that of his Patripassian opponent; on one occasion accusing Hippolytus of Ditheism. Our author further accuses Callistus of undue laxity in his moral discipline, in giving an easy absolution to sinners who had been cast out of the Church by others—some of them by Hippolytus himself; in admitting digamists and trigamists to the ranks of the clergy; in his allowing clergy to marry, and treating their doing so as a matter between God and their own consciences; in allowing Christian ladies to take to themselves, if they so desired, consorts of a lower rank, with whom they could not contract a legal marriage.

You may guess what a sensation was produced by the discovery of a work seemingly so damaging to the credit of two Roman bishops. Bishop Wordsworth of Lincoln, who published separately this part of the newly-discovered work, believes every word that Hippolytus says to the discredit of the Popes. And he cannot be much blamed for doing so; for Hippolytus has always been honoured as a saint and a martyr, and the honour must have been given him from nearly his own time; for there is in existence a statue of him, which is proved to be nearly contemporary by its having engraved on it the cycle which Hippolytus invented in order to find the time of Easter. Now that cycle was an erroneous one, and its error could not but be discovered after using it for a dozen years. We may conclude, therefore, that the time when it was engraved in perpetual honour of Hippolytus was before the error was discovered; that is to say before A.D. 240. If we accept the testimony of Hippolytus, it would follow that two bishops of Rome were not

only men of indifferent moral character, but that they fell into heresy on a primary article of the Christian faith. Dr. Newman, on the other hand, was so shocked at this libel on Roman bishops, that he declared nothing would persuade him it could be the work of the saint and martyr Hippolytus. But a far better defence of the credit of the Roman see was made by von Döllinger, at that time in full credit as an able champion of the Roman Catholic Church. His work, *Hippolytus and Callistus*, has been translated into English (1876), and I do not know a more interesting and instructive work on early Church history.

Döllinger points out that though in this work Hippolytus claims to be a bishop, and is recognized as a bishop by early authorities, yet that the name of his see is not mentioned by them; and some of them expressly declare their ignorance of it. The statement that he was bishop of Portus (near Rome), though generally accepted, rests on comparatively late and untrustworthy authorities. A number of Greek MSS., which cite passages from his writings, describe him as bishop of Rome. Further, in this work Hippolytus never ascribes the title of bishop to Callistus; and he speaks of him as having only *seemed* to obtain the dignity he aimed at. Döllinger's inference is, that the dissensions at Rome proceeded to such a length that they came to formal schism, Hippolytus being the bishop of the ultra-orthodox minority, and Callistus the one accepted by the majority of the Roman Church.

This theory gives an excellent explanation of all the phenomena presented by the treatise against heresies which we are discussing; but it is attended by the very grave difficulty that this, which would seem to have been one of the earliest schisms in the Roman see, seems to have been absolutely unknown to the rest of the Christian world; and *that* although the leader of one of the parties was that member of the Roman Church who was best known elsewhere for his learning and his literary activity. If Döllinger's hypothesis be well founded, it follows that Christians in the third century so far from regarding the bishop of Rome as their master and

teacher, regarded the question, who was bishop of Rome, as one merely of local interest, and troubled themselves little to inquire who the bishop of Rome was. Rival bishops might claim the see for years, and one of them not an obscure person, but the leading divine in the Roman Church of his day, and yet the schism not leave a trace in Church history, and, as far as we can learn, not a single Eastern Christian have heard of its existence.

Taking this view, however, the impeachment of the orthodoxy of the Roman bishops is at once disarmed. Instead of believing on the word of Hippolytus that the Roman bishops who differed with him were heretics, we may question whether it was not he himself who was in the wrong, whether in his zeal against those who confounded the Persons of the Father and the Son, he did not use such indiscreet language as to lay himself fairly open to the charge of Ditheism: that is to say, whether he did not so separate their substances as to seem to teach Christians to worship two distinct Gods. It is still easier to defend the disciplinary regulations of the Roman bishops, for the indulgence which characterized the practice of Callistus is more in accordance both with our own ideas, and with the practice of the Church since his time, than the unforgiving strictness of Hippolytus. And as for the charges of immorality, we are not bound to take as Gospel truth everything that is alleged by a witness so bitter and evidently prejudiced as Hippolytus. He clearly puts the worst construction on all the facts of the life of Callistus. Did he become bankrupt, it was because he had embezzled the funds entrusted to him. Did he get into trouble by his Christian zeal, it was because of his crimes, and because being unable to commit suicide, he was anxious for an occasion of death. And so on.

On the whole I consider that Döllinger has made out so good a case, that I am willing to acquit Zephyrinus and Callistus of the charge of heresy; though, as I have pointed out, the theory obliges us to set very low the influence exerted by the Roman Church on the rest of the Christian world at the beginning of the third century.

XXI.

THE PROGRESS OF ROMAN SUPREMACY.

AT the conclusion of the last Lecture I told you of von Döllinger's theory that Hippolytus was an antipope, claiming in opposition to Callistus the dignity of bishop of Rome. This suggests a point in the controversy which ought not to be omitted, and on which, therefore, I will say something before going further. Supposing it to be proved that in order to avoid all risk of going wrong, Christ had given to His followers this compendious rule to guard them from error—'Adhere to the bishop of Rome,' still even this simple rule has its uncertainties, for we have first to determine who the bishop of Rome is. Now, in all the time between the third century and the Reformation not a century has passed in which there has not been a schism in the Church on this very point, Christians being perplexed between the contending claims of different pretenders to the Roman see.

I have said something as to what possibly may have been one of the earliest of these schisms; I will now say something as to what is commonly counted the twenty-ninth; not the last, but the greatest and most memorable for its duration, its extent, and its damaging effects on the papal claims. I mean what is commonly called the great Western schism, which began in 1378, on the death of Pope Gregory XI. It lasted nearly forty years, during which time two or more popes disputed with each other the honour of being the rightful successor of St. Peter; and the claims of the contending parties were so evenly balanced that the nations of Western Christendom were tolerably equally divided between them.

Very respectable Roman Catholic writers have maintained that it is still impossible to decide with certainty which party was in the right—saints working miracles being numbered among the adherents of either pontiff—and finally (I quote from the Jesuit Maimbourg), even a General Council, which had the aid of the Holy Ghost to enable them to decide infallibly, did not venture to solve the question, and had recourse to its authority instead of availing itself of its knowledge,* that is to say, instead of informing the Christian world which of the popes was the true one, the Council, by virtue of its authority, deposed them all, and set up a new pope of its own.

I must assume that you have a general knowledge of the facts of the case, and will recall to your memory that the death of Gregory XI. was the termination of what has been called the Babylonish Captivity, namely, the seventy years' residence of the French popes at Avignon. It is certain that the temporal interests of the city of Rome suffered greatly from the absence of its spiritual head. The Roman magistrates complained that the faithful were no longer attracted to Rome either by devotion or interest; that there was danger lest the unfortunate city should be reduced to a vast solitude; the sacred edifices left without roof, gates, or walls; the abode of beasts, which cropped the grass off their very altars. Accordingly, the death of Gregory XI.,† and the election of his successor taking place at Rome; although the Cardinals, being French, would undoubtedly, if they had free choice, have elected a French successor, they were surrounded by a violent mob, threatening to tear them in pieces and set the house on fire over their heads if they elected a foreign pope; and although they had at first protested that an election constrained by violence would not

* *Histoire du grand schisme d'Occident*, p. 3.

† He had come to Rome chiefly on the persuasion of Catherine of Siena, a saint remarkable for having had the marks of the Saviour's wounds imprinted on her body, as well as for having had an espousal ring with four pearls and a diamond, placed permanently on her finger by our Lord Himself; although, to spare her modesty, these honours were invisible to all eyes but her own (Bolland, *AA. SS.*, April 30, pp. 882, 901).

give a real pope but an intruder, yet ultimately they gave way, elected an Italian Pope, Urban VI., notified his election as usual to the Courts of Europe, and did not set up the plea of constraint until Urban had showed himself troublesome in the character of reformer of abuses. Then they made a unanimous secession; declared that they had only chosen Urban in the persuasion that he would in conscience have refused the pontificate, his election to which was only due to violence. 'But he, forgetful of his salvation, and burning with ambition, had allowed himself to be enthroned and crowned; and assumed the name of pope, though he rather merited that of apostate and antichrist.' And so they set up a French pope, Clement VII.

Now, the schism thus begun lasted longer than what is commonly called a generation of men. A Christian who was of an age to form an opinion on the subject, say twenty-five years of age, when the schism began, might have died in mature age before it was finished: all the time he might have used more care in trying to choose the right pope than most men now spend in choosing the right doctrine; he might have followed the opinion supported by his nation, and backed by a considerable number of men in high esteem for learning and piety; and yet some hundred years after his death it might be discovered that in spite of all his care he had decided wrongly, and had wandered from the true fold out of which there is no salvation.

It is true that high Roman Catholic authority can be adduced in support of the opinion that either pope might safely be followed; a charitable opinion certainly, but one which can hardly be consistently maintained. For if Christ has given His Church an infallible guide to truth, it surely must be held to be no small sin to forsake that guide and follow an impostor, more especially when the true guide distinctly declares that those who adhere to the impostor hazard their eternal salvation. This can certainly be proved by contemporary evidence, that whatever may be said now, Christians at the time were held bound to decide the question rightly, as they valued their eternal salvation. In order to

prove this I took the trouble to copy some of the curses denounced by each pope against the adherents of the other; but I have not time to read them. Suffice it to say that the two popes were in perfect agreement in informing the Christian world that this was a matter in which a wrong choice would endanger a man's eternal salvation.*

Remember that the main argument for the existence of an infallible guide to the Church is that it is inconceivable God could have left Christians exposed to the risk of error in any matter concerning their eternal salvation. But here we see that the institution of the office of Pope does not preserve Christians from such risk of error; that on the contrary Christians were left for several years together perplexed between the claims of two popes, in favour of each of whom so much might be said, and each of whom uttered the most frightful curses against the other and his adherents; and one of the two must have been the real pope, and his curses have had all the efficacy which papal dignity can give. One or other of the two was the infallible guide to Christians, and both agreed that this was a matter on which to decide wrongly

* The following is an extract from a circular issued by the cardinals (see Baluzius, *Vitae Pontt. Aven.* ii. 847):—'Having been appointed watchmen by the Lord God of Hosts, and occupying the highest post next after the Roman Pontiff, we are bound vigilantly to point out to the faithful the dangers which threaten their souls, and the snares and attacks of the enemy. Whereas, therefore, we have learned for certain that that seducer, Bartholomew, formerly Archbishop of Bari, falsely calling himself Pope, has, as another Antichrist, sent certain false prophets to different parts of the world, whom he alone has constituted Cardinals, together with some other defenders of his wickedness, in order that by false persuasions, and crafty suggestions, they may seduce the Christian people, and may cause them, *to the eternal damnation of their souls*, to adhere to the aforesaid apostate; and whereas, on this account, our most holy Lord Pope Clement VII. has desired us, who have perfect knowledge of this matter, to instruct the faithful concerning it; and whereas it pertains to none others than us, next after our most holy Lord Pope Clement VII., to inform the faithful who is the true Pope, therefore, we beseech you all, in Jesus Christ, *for the safety of your souls* to adhere to the same Lord Clement, &c.'

Here it is taught plainly enough that the adherents of Urban perilled their salvation; and there certainly is great show of reason in what the cardinals say, viz. that if any doubt should arise as to who the true pope was, no one could be fitter than the cardinals (who are the next highest authority to the pope) to decide it.

Urban's counter proclamation, which is too long to be quoted in full, will be found in Raynaldus's continuation of Baronius (*An.* 1378). He denounces

would peril a Christian's eternal salvation. The question was an eminently practical one, for if a man happened to be the subject of a monarch who had taken the wrong side, he was released from his allegiance, and incurred the penalty of excommunication if he rendered assistance to his sovereign.

And yet this is a point on which high Roman Catholic authority now holds that both popes were wrong. Maimbourg (p. 57) tells us 'the thunderbolts and the anathemas which the two popes hurled against each other, and against all those who followed the opposite party, did no harm to anybody.' Antoninus, archbishop of Florence, who was canonized as a saint in 1523, writes as follows:—'There were among the adherents of either party, all the time the schism lasted, most learned men and most religious, and what is more, even distinguished by their miracles; and the question could never be so decided, but that there remained a doubt with very many. And though it be necessary to salvation to believe that there is but one vicar of Christ, yet on the occasion of a schism, when several are called popes, it does not appear necessary

those children of iniquity and perdition, Robert (*i.e.* Clement VII.), and the other cardinals, who had not only involved themselves in the bonds of sin, but being given over to a reprobate mind, have endeavoured to draw others with them to destruction. He declares that being unable, without grievous remorse of conscience, any longer to tolerate such wickedness, he pronounces that Robert, &c., are schismatics, apostates, blasphemers, and are to be punished as heretics: he excommunicates them, deprives them of all their dignities, confiscates all their goods, declares their persons detestable and infamous, and orders them to be kept by the faithful in close prison. Anyone who should commit their bodies to ecclesiastical sepulture is excommunicated, and can only be absolved on condition of disinterring them with his own hands. Everyone of whatever rank, king, queen, emperor, or cardinal, is forbidden to receive these excommunicated persons into his lands, or to allow them to be supplied with any grain, wine, flesh, clothes, wood, victuals, money, merchandize, or any goods whatsoever. Every private person is excommunicated who shall transgress any of the aforesaid commands, or who shall knowingly call the aforesaid Robert (styling himself Clement) by the name of Pope, or who shall believe him to be Pope, from which excommunication he is not to be freed by any but the Roman Pontiff, except in the article of death. He releases the subjects of the princes who adhere to his rival, from obedience to their monarchs; and he offers to all those who shall undertake a crusade for the extermination of the aforesaid schismatics, and who shall persecute them to the utmost of their power, the privileges and indulgences granted to those who proceed to the succour of the Holy Land.

to salvation to believe that this or that is the true pope, but only whichever of the two was canonically elected, and no one is bound to know who was canonically elected any more than he is bound to be acquainted with the canon law; but the people may follow their princes and prelates.'

In short, provided you believe there is a pope somewhere or other, it is quite unnecessary to know who he is, and you may be quite safe though you adhere to a false pope, and though the true pope be cursing you as hard as he can all the time. Suppose that in Switzerland you had some doubt whether an incompetent guide had not imposed on you by a false certificate, what would you think if, on inquiring at the office for guides, you were told that it was certainly absolutely necessary for you to have the authorized guide, but that if you had duly paid your fee at the office it was quite immaterial whether you had got hold of the right man or not? In whose interests would you suppose such a regulation to have been framed? If it is asserted then that it is inconceivable that God could leave His Church without some guide able to lead her infallibly into truth, we may answer that it is just as necessary that God should make men know who that infallible guide is, and that it is indelibly written in the page of history that God did leave the Church for a space of several years in a state in which it was next to impossible to determine who that infallible guide was. And it avails nothing to say that this was 500 years ago, for we cannot suppose that God dealt with His Church by different rules in the fourteenth or fifteenth centuries and in the nineteenth. The souls of Christians then were as dear to Him as the souls of Christians now, and it cannot be said that anything is essential to the being of the Church which God did not see fit to give her then.

Before parting with the case of Hippolytus, I have another remark to make on the ignorance of the Eastern world on the subject of his pretensions to be bishop of Rome. If he never made the claim, how came so many in the East to call him bishop of Rome? If he did, how was it that no one in the East should have heard that the see was contested

by two rivals? I must add it, therefore, as a further proof that the bishop of Rome was not recognized as head over the whole Church, that the appointment of that bishop was from early times, and in theory down to the present day, a matter of mere local concern. In early times the election rested at Rome, as elsewhere, with the clergy and people. They did not think of their bishop then as the infallible interpreter of doctrine, but as the administrator of the funds in which that Church was very rich; and, accordingly, when they wanted a bishop they did not look for a learned divine, but for a good man of business. Most commonly the choice fell on the archdeacon, who was habitually the bishop's prime minister. So regular was this, that a story is told, though I own on not very trustworthy authority, that in one remarkable case, the bishop finding the archdeacon to be a man whom he would not like for a successor, was spiteful enough to spoil his chance by ordaining him priest.* In theory, the bishop is at the present day appointed by the local clergy; for the cardinals are the bishops of the six suburbican sees,† the Roman deacons, and the parish priests of the different Roman parishes. In fact, the cardinals are leading Roman Catholic divines of different European countries, and the majority of them do not reside at Rome, and have only a titular connexion with certain Roman parishes. If the bishop of Rome is head of the whole Church, it is quite right that representatives of the whole Church should take part in his appointment. But the titles of the cardinals are a standing witness to the present day that the pope is but bishop of a single city, and that his appointment was a matter with which persons outside that city were not supposed to have any concern.

I return now to carry a little further down the history of the Roman claims. In the last Lecture we found that up to

* This story is told about Cornelius and Novatian by Eulogius of Alexandria (Photius, *Cod.* 182).

† These sees had been seven: Portus, Ostia, Prænestе, Sabina, Tusculum, Albano, and St. Rufina; but the last has, for many centuries, ceased to exist as a separate see. On the other hand, the Roman deacons, who for many centuries had been only seven, are now reckoned as fourteen.

the end of the second century the importance of the bishop of Rome is subordinate to that of the Church of Rome. Just at the end of that century the Clementine fictions were brought to Rome, and it is not till then we hear anything of the succession from St. Peter.

Now, when you see Patristic evidence produced in proof of papal Supremacy, you must be always careful to examine who it is that is cited. I have not now in my mind merely that ordinary caution which distinguishes the scientific from the controversial use of authorities. With Romish controversialists of the less instructed sort the pre-scientific use of authorities still prevails. With them a Father is a Father. If they can find, in any of those to whom that name is given, words resembling some assertion which they wish to have believed, his name is clapped into a list of witnesses (which sometimes they print in capital letters) all seemingly counted of equal value. Such a list, however imposing it may appear to the unlearned, is only glanced at with contempt by one who understands the subject, and who knows that some of the writers cited say nothing really relevant to the question on which they are appealed to, and that others are persons whose unsupported statements have no weight. For, with increased knowledge of ancient documents, we are now able in many cases to compare the statements of Fathers with the sources whence they derived them, and in this way to form a judgment how far the reporters are trustworthy. And the result is that, as might have been expected, the Fathers are in this respect found to be men of very unequal merit; and the historical student is forced to discriminate, building nothing with any confidence on the assertions of some, who are habitually wanting in that care and caution which we find in others.

But the point which I now wish to urge is the necessity of discriminating authorities geographically; for the geographical test is as effective as the chronological in showing that the notion of the Petrine supremacy is a development and not a tradition. Whatever doctrines were delivered to the Church by our Lord and His apostles, must have been

held by the Church at all times and in all places. Now, it is owned that the doctrine of Roman Supremacy was not held by the Church in all times; for it has to be confessed, as Newman does in passages which I have quoted, that such a form of Church government was altogether unsuited to the condition of the Church in the first ages. But we argue further that if our Lord had put His disciples under the government of a single head, Christian missionaries wherever they went would have carried with them the knowledge who their appointed ruler was, and would have taught the Churches which they founded to obey him. There would have been no difference between East and West as to the meaning of the texts which settled the constitution of the universal Church. The teaching of the Church on this point would have been in all places the same; for this is not a subordinate doctrine, a true tradition concerning which might conceivably have been lost. The doctrine is a fundamental one, and those who had ever known and received it must have kept up the memory of it by perpetual practical application of it.

What we actually find is very different. The Gospel, you know, contains a system of truths first promulgated at Jerusalem, and which starting from that centre have been propagated all over the civilized world. Now, nothing is more certain than that the notion of Roman supremacy did not start from Jerusalem as its centre, but from Rome as its centre. In tracing the history of the growth of the empire of heathen Rome, we find the city first battling with the neighbouring Italian towns; then, when it had established its dominion in Italy, crossing the sea, and making conquests in foreign countries. At length its expansive power reaches its limits: it gains some temporary victories in Parthia and Germany, but never makes a permanent conquest of these countries. In like manner, in tracing the history of the growth of the ecclesiastical empire of Rome, we find that the movement began at Rome itself; that it was at first resisted in its own immediate neighbourhood; that by degrees it triumphed over that opposition, and extended itself

over all the West. But in the East, though it occasionally gained temporary victories, their fruits were always short-lived; and ultimately the attempt to bring the East under the dominion of Rome utterly failed.

Bearing all this in mind, you will see the necessity, when any ancient writer is quoted as asserting the right of the bishop of Rome to rule over other Churches, of inquiring who it is that says it. I might tell you, for example, that several eminent authors assert that Paris is the capital of the civilized world, the centre of European thought and culture. But you would smile at me if, when asked who these eminent authors were, I had to reply Victor Hugo, Comte, and other enthusiastic Frenchmen. In like manner we can but smile when Romish divines, who have undertaken to adduce evidence in proof of the papal claims, tender to us the assertions of popes, or of papal legates, or of Roman presbyters. Such evidence is only good to show what Rome would like to have believed, but determines nothing as to what really was by Christ's appointment the constitution of His Church.

It is much more to the purpose when they adduce Eastern evidence; but such evidence always turns out to be, not spontaneous acknowledgment of the justice of the Roman demands, but temporary acquiescence in them by persons at the moment badly in want of Roman assistance. For the cause of Rome was greatly helped by Eastern divisions. Arianism, Nestorianism, Eutychianism, were all Eastern questions; nor did the Western mind of that age appear to possess the subtlety necessary for the originating such disputes. Neither, again, was the Latin language adequate to express all the subtle distinctions and shades of thought for which the copiousness and flexibility of the Greek tongue easily found expression. But each of the contending parties in the East was always glad to get the West on its side; and the party successful in this endeavour could not afford to be critical if there was too much arrogance in the tone which their Roman supporters adopted. Thus the Easterns were in danger of finding the fable realized of the horse triumphing over the stag by the assistance of the man, and

finding when his victory was won that he had permanently a rider on his back. Actually, however, they shook the rider off after he had served their temporary ends. For though in politics a party, not the strongest, will sometimes succeed in attaining its ends through the alternate assistance given it by two other rival parties bidding against each other for its support, yet it loses its advantage if it demands more than either of the rivals will grant. The Romans demanded more than any Eastern would concede, and so there ensued that schism between East and West which continues to the present day.

The earliest bishop of Rome whom I can find to have claimed privileges as Peter's successor was Stephen in his controversy with Cyprian, about A.D. 256, at which time the story told in the Clementines had had some fifty years of acceptance at Rome. I have already (p. 143) quoted some of Cyprian's language, from which you will have seen that though he did not dispute the assertion that Stephen sat in the chair of Peter, he did not by any means regard the bishop of Rome as the Church's infallible guide, nor even as a competent witness to apostolic tradition if his testimony seemed to conflict with what was found in the written word.

Now, Roman Catholics may say that in the controversy as to the validity of heretical baptism, Stephen was right and Cyprian wrong. I do not know whether they are quite consistent in saying so; for of late years, I suppose in order to frighten waverers, they have taken to the profanity of reiterating baptism in the case of perverts from our communion; a profanity only partially mitigated by the device of conditional baptism, which was not invented until some centuries after the time of Stephen and Cyprian. Nor shall I inquire whether Stephen, in his acknowledgment of heretical baptism, was not more indiscriminate than the Church was afterwards, which always has been careful to distinguish between different classes of heretics, and to examine whether the baptisms which it acknowledges have been duly made in the name of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.* But for my

* See the 8th Canon of the Council of Arles.

present purpose it is quite irrelevant to discuss whether Stephen or Cyprian was right. If I were to propose the question to you whether in their parliamentary disputes Mr. Gladstone or Mr. D'Israeli had been in the right, I dare say you would be far from unanimous in your answer. But if I asked whether Mr. Gladstone acknowledged Mr. D'Israeli as an infallible authority or *vice versa*, you could be unanimous in answering that question. We may be as willing to do honour to the memory of both Stephen and Cyprian as Walter Scott, in the introduction to *Marmion*, was to the memory of both Pitt and Fox. But certain it is that Cyprian showed that he felt himself as little bound to follow the ruling of Stephen as Fox was to follow the ruling of Pitt. If the dispute about the validity of heretical baptism had not been quelled by a timely persecution, there was danger that it might have caused a serious schism in the Church. Cyprian was not only unanimously supported by a council of eighty-seven African bishops, but he had enthusiastic allies in the East.* Chief of these was Firmilian of Cappadocia, at that time one of the most illustrious of Eastern bishops. There is extant a Latin translation of Firmilian's letter to Cyprian; and we need not doubt that the translation was made by Cyprian himself, though some of the first editors of Cyprian's works were minded to suppress the letter altogether on account of the great disrespect with which he treats the bishop of Rome. Certainly it is not surprising that Roman Catholics should have found matter of offence in Firmilian's letter. He begins by congratulating himself that through Stephen's 'inhumanity' (in breaking communion with those who re-baptized converts from heresy) he had had experimental proof of Cyprian's faith and wisdom. But, he adds, that for this benefit resulting to him from Stephen's conduct, Stephen himself was no more entitled to gratitude than Judas Iscariot was entitled to our gratitude for the benefits which resulted to the world from his treason to our Lord. This is pretty strong to begin with; and he follows up with charges of 'audacia,' 'insolentia,' 'imperitia,' 'aperta et

* On the part taken by Dionysius of Alexandria, see Euseb. *H. E.* vii. 5, *sqq.*

manifesta stultitia' : Stephen is 'haereticis omnibus pejor' : 'was not Stephen ashamed to say this;' 'he had the impudence (ausus est) to say that;' 'he defamed Peter and Paul by the sentiments which he attributed to them.' But Stephen appears to have given much occasion for this asperity of language; for Firmilian quotes him as having called Cyprian 'false Christ, false apostle, deceitful worker.' We must regret that men for whom we feel so much respect should have treated each other with so little; but the reason for producing these controversial amenities is that Firmilian tells us that Stephen had boasted of his succession from Peter: 'de Episcopatus sui loco gloriatur et se successionem Petri tenere contendit,' 'per successionem cathedram Petri se tenere praedicat.' What privileges exactly Stephen claimed on the strength of this succession we are not informed; but both his antagonists treat the connexion with Peter and Paul as only aggravating his fault if he does not harmonize with them in doctrine. Other evidence of the arrogance of Stephen's claims is suggested by Cyprian's language in addressing his African council: 'None of *us* sets himself up as a bishop of bishops, or by tyrannical terror forces his colleagues to a necessity of obeying; inasmuch as every bishop, in the free use of his liberty and power, has the right of forming his own judgment, and can no more be judged by another than he can himself judge another.'

The result is that we may name the episcopate of Stephen as the time, when out of the fiction that Peter had been bishop of Rome, his supposed successors began to develop the consequence that they had a right to rule other bishops; but we find that this development was at the time not only scouted in the East, but was violently resisted in the neighbouring province of Africa.

A somewhat earlier incident in Stephen's history will show how far the supremacy of the pope was from being then established. Two Spanish bishops, Basilides and Martial, had denied Christ in time of persecution, and had therefore been deposed by their brethren, and two others, Felix and Sabinus, consecrated in their stead. Basilides, however,

went to Rome, and there obtained recognition as bishop from Stephen. The clergy and people of the towns over which these men had presided sent to Cyprian, who, assembling thirty-seven bishops in Council, decided in a synodical letter that the deposition of Basilides and Martial was right, and the election of Felix and Sabinus canonical. Cyprian says: 'Nor can it rescind an ordination rightly performed that Basilides, after his crime had been detected and his conscience laid bare even by his own confession, canvassing to be unjustly restored to the episcopate from which he had been justly deposed, went to Rome and deceived Stephen our colleague residing at a distance, and ignorant of the real truth. The effect of this is not to efface, but to swell the crimes of Basilides, in that to his former guilt is now added the guilt of deceit and circumvention. For he is not so much to be blamed who through negligence was imposed on, as he is to be execrated who through fraud imposed on him.' Now, if a Roman Catholic maintains that his present Church system is conformed to primitive usage, let him imagine a parallel case happening now. Let him conceive two Spanish bishops deposed by their neighbours, and others elected in their place without consulting the pope. The deposed bishops appeal to Rome and are acquitted. Meanwhile the Spanish clergy send the intruding bishops as a deputation not to the pope, but let us say to the archbishop of Paris, who, assembling a provincial synod, decides that the former bishops had been rightly deposed, and the new canonically elected, and that 'the appealing bishop had only aggravated his guilt by deceiving Pio Nono our colleague; but excusing Pio Nono in that he is not so much to be blamed who through negligence was imposed on, as he who through fraud had imposed on him.'*

This history shows that in the third century the Christian Churches formed one great community. No Church was completely isolated from the rest: if disputes took place in it their brethren elsewhere would take an interest in it, and would use their influence in bringing about the triumph of

* Pusey's *Eirenicon*, p. 75.

right. That the great Roman Church should possess influence of this kind was a matter of course. But we see now that the possession of such influence was no exclusive prerogative of that see. Other Churches, too, claimed the right to make their voices heard, and had no scruple in taking a side opposite to that taken by the bishop of Rome.

When the Empire became Christian it was more impossible than ever for one Church to be independent of others; for certain privileges and immunities were immediately given to the Christian bishops and clergy; and if there were any controversy as to the occupancy of any see, it was necessary for the civil authorities to know who was recognized by the Church generally as the rightful possessor. When Constantine obtained undisputed possession of power, he found a violent controversy raging, no less a question being involved than who was the rightful head of the great Church of North Africa; the consecration of Cæcilian as bishop of Carthage, having been pronounced invalid by the party which soon came to have Donatus as its leader. Constantine would, no doubt, be anxious to make himself acquainted with the rules established in the Christian Church for regulating the decision of such controversies; but he never appears to have heard from anyone that it would suffice to get the decision of the bishop of Rome. On the contrary, the order of the steps taken in this Donatist controversy was exactly the reverse of what, according to later theory, it ought to have been. There was first a decision by the bishop of Rome; then an appeal from the pope to a Council; lastly, neither pope nor Council having succeeded in making a settlement, the matter was taken up by the Emperor personally. And when I say a decision by the bishop of Rome, you must not suppose that that prelate, great and influential as he was, had taken on himself on his own authority to pronounce judgment on the question. He interfered only as commissioned by the Emperor, and in this commission* he was not

* It is given by Eusebius (*H. E.* x. 5), where also is to be found the summons to the Council of Arles addressed to Chrestus, bishop of Syracuse. Chrestus is therein authorized to demand a public conveyance, and to take with him two presbyters and three servants.

alone: three bishops are joined with him in it by name; and actually some twenty took part in the investigation. How ill it would have fared with the bishop of Rome if he had acted alone appears from the next stage of the proceedings; for the Donatists treated a Council of even twenty bishops (the bishop of Rome being one of them) as too small to overrule the decision arrived at by seventy bishops in Africa; so they were granted a rehearing of the case, which took place before a larger body of bishops assembled at Arles. Even this did not prove decisive, and the case had to be tried once more by the Emperor himself. The whole history shows how completely undeveloped at that date was the whole idea of Papal Supremacy, even over the Western Church.

The course of events, however, was favourable to the development of Roman claims. In the Arian controversies which soon followed, depositions of bishops were frequent; some were formally deposed for alleged heretical doctrine; others were exiled, and lost their sees on charges which only made express mention of offences against the State, however much we may believe them to have been prompted by doctrinal enmity.

Now, it was in the very nature of things that a person who thought himself aggrieved by the action of his immediate Church superiors, should seek for sympathy and redress outside. The Churches in the near neighbourhood would naturally be first appealed to; but what I have already told you of the relations of Rome with all parts of the Christian world ought to prepare you to expect that the intercession of this powerful benefactor would have prevailing influence with every Church, and therefore would be eagerly sought. With the growth at Rome of ambitious ideas there sprung up a desire to convert this power of friendly remonstrance into a legal right; and I have now to speak of the occasion when the sanction of a Council was first given to the interference of the bishop of Rome with regard to the deposition or restoration of bishops outside his immediate jurisdiction.

In the latter half of the fourth century there were together

at Rome two prelates, concerning whom the judgment of posterity has been different, both deposed by their nearer neighbours, both trying to enlist on their side the bishop of Rome. I mean Athanasius, whose name needs no explanation, and Marcellus of Ancyra, a strenuous opponent of the Arians, whom therefore the orthodox party were reluctant to condemn, but who is now generally owned to have made dangerous confusion of the personalities of the Father and the Son. Athanasius, exiled from the Eastern Empire, was driven to the West. He and Marcellus each protested his innocence to the Roman bishop, who, on their instigation, wrote to their accusers, challenging them to come to Rome and there establish their charges; and when, after a year and a half, the challenge remained unaccepted, Pope Julius pronounced the accused parties innocent.

It remained to be seen what a General Council would think of this acquittal, and one was arranged to meet at Sardica. But when the Eastern representatives came thither, they inquired whether Athanasius and Marcellus would be treated as deposed, or whether they would be permitted to take their seats as members of the Council; and on finding that the latter was intended, the Easterns separated in a body and held a separate Council at a place called Philippopolis; so Sardica was purely a Western Council, and strongly anti-Arian.

You will understand how important it was then in the interests of orthodoxy to give a right of appeal to Rome. The Arians were in the ascendant in the East, and when they got a good pretext, deposed orthodox bishops. Not long before, a semi-Arian Council at Antioch had made canons prohibiting all appeals beyond the Metropolitan of the province. It was manifestly in the interests of orthodoxy that redress should be obtainable from the bishop of Rome, who might be trusted to be on the right side. So the Council of Sardica decreed that if a bishop thought he had good reason to appeal from a provincial judgment of his case, he might demand a new trial, 'Let us, if you please,

honour the memory of the Apostle Peter, and let him write to Julius, bishop of Rome, who, if he thinks fit, may order the case to be tried again, and appoint judges to try it.' You will observe that what this Council granted to the Bishop of Rome is much short of what has been claimed for him in later times. It only gives him appellate jurisdiction in the case of a bishop who conceives himself to have been unjustly treated, but it gives no power of original jurisdiction to the Pope, no power to evoke causes to Rome, or set aside the judgment of Councils. And the power of appellate jurisdiction is shown to be not an original possession of the see, but one given it then for the first time. We shall see presently in a remarkable case that the Roman bishops claimed the right of appeal solely on this ground that a Council had bestowed it on them. The Greek Canonists, when they accepted the decrees of Sardica, held that the limited power of receiving appeals then granted to Rome did not extend to the whole Church, and that the Patriarch of Constantinople had equal power in his own province. I think myself that the Council of Sardica intended to give the bishop of Rome this power over the whole Church, for the cases at issue at the time were Eastern cases; but it is obvious that this Council of Western bishops had no power to bind the Eastern Church or deprive them of any portion of their independence. The truth, however, I believe to be not so much that the East rejected these Sardican canons as that for some centuries people in the East knew nothing about them. That the original of the canons was Latin, not Greek, appears from the fact that the three oldest Latin texts are in strictly verbal agreement, although in the case of other canons, whose original is known to have been Greek, they give independent translations. These canons are unknown to all the early Greek writers who might have been expected to show acquaintance with them; they were not mentioned either at the second General Council, that of Constantinople, nor in the fourth, that of Chalcedon, although these Councils dealt with the same subject; nor do the Greek

Church Historians, Socrates, Sozomen, and Theodoret, make any mention of them when relating the transactions at Sardica.*

As I have had occasion to speak of the Council at Antioch in 341, I may add a few words as to what there took place. You will observe that we have now got half way through the fourth century, and that by this time Roman pretensions had very much advanced. However, the bishop of Rome was still contending not for a right of deciding Eastern questions, but only for that of being consulted about them. The Council of Antioch demanded that the bishop of Rome should acquiesce, without further inquiry, in the conclusions come to by Eastern Councils with regard to the deposition of certain bishops, on pain of excommunication himself, if he held communion with bishops who had been deposed. On that occasion twenty-nine useful canons were passed which were afterwards, at Chalcedon, adopted into the code of the Universal Church. Pope Julius protested against these canons on the ground that he had not been summoned to that Council, and that by Ecclesiastical law no canon was binding on the Church which had not received his assent. I don't know that we ought to allow Julius to be witness in his own cause; for this whole history is one of claims made by Popes, at first meeting no recognition elsewhere, but by dint of pertinacious repetition at length obtaining more or less acceptance. The Greek historians, Socrates (ii. 8, 17) and Sozomen (iii. 10), appear simply to repeat what had been said by Julius. But if his words are fairly weighed, they seem to me to imply no more than this, that the bringing in new canons for the government of the whole Church was not proper to be done merely by local Councils: 'Judgment ought to be given according to the

* I do not go so far as a learned writer in the *Church Quarterly Review*, April, 1881, p. 189, who on the grounds stated above, and for other similar reasons, has grave doubts whether these Sardican decrees are not altogether a Roman forgery; for he himself gives good reasons for thinking that a forger would have proceeded differently, and for example would have claimed for his canons some higher origin than Sardica. Besides, as I have pointed out in the text, the Sardican decrees correspond well to the circumstances of the time to which they are attributed.

canon of the whole Church, and not so as you have given it. . . . You ought to have written to all of us that so we might have decided what was just.' And the first place in such a consultation, he maintains, is due to the bishop of Rome, especially in a matter relating to the see of Alexandria, which, according to Roman ideas, had been evangelized from Rome, viz. by Peter's 'interpreter,' St. Mark.

I may remark, in passing, how what I said already as to the precedence of sees being merely determined by the civil greatness of their cities is confirmed by the instance of Antioch and Alexandria. In ecclesiastical associations Antioch was far the superior. It was the older Church, and claimed to have been presided over by St. Peter, while Alexandria only pretended to have been evangelized later by a disciple of Peter. But Alexandria was far the greater city, and so its bishop came to hold the second place after Rome; and accordingly, the trial of the case of Athanasius at Antioch was open to the objection that it seemed to subject the greater see to the less, besides that the place of trial was so remote from that where the facts to be investigated occurred. But to return to the claims made by Julius, while he protests against new canons made at Antioch without his knowledge and consent, he gives no intimation that he thought that new canons could have been made at Rome either without the consent of other Churches.

Having spoken of Sardica, I may as well go on to speak of the well-known Roman attempt to pass off the decrees of that Council as Nicene. The case of Apiarius is likely to be familiar to you. He was an African presbyter, excommunicated for misconduct by his bishop. He went to Rome, and prevailed on Pope Zosimus to take up his cause with some warmth. The Pope's interference, and the claims on which it was founded, were the subject of discussions in at least three African Synods. Zosimus, you know, founded his right to interfere on the Sardican canons of which I have been speaking; but which he quoted as Nicene. The African prelates, in council assembled, declared that there was no such canon in their copy of the Nicene code, and they begged

the Pope to write to Constantinople and Alexandria, requesting that the Greek copies there might be collated, in order to ascertain whether the disputed canons had really been passed at Nicæa. The Papal legates begged hard that the Council would be content with this request to the Pope to examine into the matter for himself; but the Council very wisely determined to send messengers of their own to the East to get copies of the Greek version of the canons of Nicæa. The result of the mission appears from the final letter of the African bishops. In this, after giving a short account of what had been done, they request that the Pope will not in future receive persons excommunicated by their Synods, this being contrary to the canons of Nicæa. They protest against appeals to foreign tribunals; they deny the Pope's right to send legates to exercise jurisdiction in his name, which they say is not authorized by any canon of the Fathers, and they request that the Pope will not send any agent or nuncio to interfere with them in any business for fear the Church should suffer through pride and ambition. In fact, we can plainly see that the arrogance of the Papal representatives in Africa contributed greatly to the soreness which was felt at Roman interference.

In defence of the false quotation of the Sardican canons as Nicene, it is alleged that it was the practice in books of canons to add to the earlier Councils those of later, those of Sardica following next after the Nicene, and therefore quoted under the same heading. That the mistake was not purely accidental (as far as the Roman scribes were concerned) is made likely by a Roman manuscript of the canons still extant, in which the name Julius, which occurs in the Sardican decree, and which determines their date to that episcopate, is deliberately altered to Sylvester, who was bishop at the time of the Council of Nicæa. In the absence of any evidence to connect Pope Zosimus himself with this fraud, I willingly acquit him of deliberate forgery, and charitably believe that he erred in honest ignorance, having been imposed on by some too zealous subordinate; and the same excuse may be made for the Papal use of the forged decretals

of which I shall speak in another Lecture. But these instances show how absurd it is to claim for the Pope immunity from error in his declarations of doctrine, while he is allowed to be liable to error with regard to matters of fact.* How can we put confidence in the judgment of one who is mistaken as to the facts which ought to guide his judgment? When a bishop of Rome has to decide what rights he shall claim for his see, it surely is important for him to know what rights early Councils had recognized and what rights his predecessors had exercised. If a Pope should be entirely misinformed on these points, it is quite to be expected that he should form a false estimate of the rightful claims of his see. Of course if a person is determined to believe in Infallibility he will do so in defiance of all reason. I have already told you that there are those who have no difficulty in believing that the decisions of a Council are infallibly true, even when it has been shown that the arguments which induced the Council to come to these decisions are hopelessly bad. Such persons will not be shaken in their belief in the correctness of the Pope's decisions by any proof that he has been led to them on false information. Yet if anyone tells us that it is incredible that God would leave His Church without an

* The use made of this distinction in the Jansenist controversy is well known. In 1653, five propositions, said to have been extracted from Jansen's book, were submitted to Pope Innocent X., who condemned them as heretical. The Jansenists, when called on to subscribe to this condemnation, found themselves able to do so without giving up their allegiance to their master. The propositions, no doubt, were heretical, since the Pope declared them so, but they had never been asserted by Jansen, at least not in the sense in which they were heretical. The Jansenists were deprived of this evasion in 1656, by a new condemnation obtained from Innocent's successor, Alexander VII., in which not only were the five propositions declared to be heretical, but it was expressly stated that Jansen had asserted them in the heretical sense. The Jansenists then declared that the question whether the five propositions were heretical was one of doctrine, on which they were bound to submit to the Pope's decision; but that the question whether Jansen had asserted them was one of fact, on which the Pope was liable to be deceived by false information; and, therefore, that before they could accept his ruling, it was necessary that the passages should be produced where Jansen had made the alleged erroneous assertions. The distinction relied on by the Jansenists is absolutely necessary to save Papal Infallibility on the Pelagian question, for the only defence that can be made for Zosimus is to assert that the Pope's doctrine was sound all along, and that he was merely deceived as to the

infallible guide, we can reply that it is quite as incredible that He would permit His appointed guide to proceed by such methods as ought, without a miracle, to lead him to false conclusions, and would take no heed to guard him against giving credence to forgery and lies. At all events the case of Apiarius shows clearly that the right of receiving appeals was not an original possession of the see of Rome. Zosimus claimed it as a privilege bestowed by the great Council of Nicæa; the African bishops were ready to concede it if it had been so bestowed, but asked for proof that it had been. That it belonged to the see by divine right does not seem to have been dreamed of on either side.

Thus we see that even in the West at the beginning of the fifth century the pre-eminence of the bishop of Rome implied no right of absolute dominion, but was subject to strict constitutional limitations. The East had showed its independence still more plainly a little time before at the second General Council. That Council was, as I have already said, a purely Eastern body; and its decrees were made not only without Western assistance, but in some points in opposition to Western opinion. I refer particularly to disputes at the time as to who were the rightful occupants of the

matter of fact whether Pelagius and Cælestius had contravened it. Yet if the Jansenist position be tenable, any heretic might safely disregard condemnation by the Pope.

The Jansenists, persecuted in France, found shelter in Holland, where they flourished for a time, and have preserved to our day a succession of bishops, which enabled them to consecrate a bishop for the 'Old Catholics.' The late Dr. Tregelles, in his little book on the Jansenists, gives an account of an interview he had in 1850, with Van Santen, the Jansenist Archbishop of Utrecht, who gave him particulars of an attempt made by Pope Leo XII. soon after his accession in 1827, through his legate, Cappucini, to obtain his submission. The most interesting thing in it is Cappucini's reply to Van Santen's plea that he could not subscribe the formulary which declared that the condemned propositions were in Jansen's book, because he himself had read the book, and knew that the propositions were not there: 'Pope Urban VIII. [the same who condemned Galileo], had by his bull, *In eminenti*, condemned Jansen's book, and forbidden the reading of it. In reading it at all you were doing a forbidden act, and could not expect God to give you clear light when you were thus acting in presumption. No knowledge, therefore, that you imagine yourself to have obtained in this unlawful way, can conflict with the clear duty of implicit obedience to the Holy Father.'

sees of Antioch, Constantinople, and Alexandria, when the competitors who had the strongest Western support were rejected. And yet the time was one when the voice of the West was likely to be listened to with unusual respect; for the Easterns had been under obligations to the West, both politically and ecclesiastically. They had quite lately been obliged to cry out for Western help when their Emperor perished at Adrianople in the most disastrous defeat the Roman arms had experienced since Cannæ. And the orthodox Eastern bishops, whom the death of the Arian Emperor had restored to ascendency, could not but gratefully remember what faithful support the West had given them in the time of the Arian domination. If the West was to be praised for having disregarded the decisions of Eastern Councils which had deposed Athanasius and other orthodox bishops, how, in consistency, could they be denied the right to revise other Eastern decisions? Accordingly, this was what the West claimed to do; though it is to be remarked that the leader in the movement was not the bishop of Rome, but Ambrose of Milan. He appears not to have had much independent knowledge of Eastern transactions, but simply to have adopted the view of them taken at Alexandria. That he should have regarded Paulinus as the rightful bishop of Antioch is not surprising, but we are somewhat astonished to find that in the contest for the see of Constantinople Ambrose gave his adherence to the Egyptian competitor, Maximus the Cynic, who, if the accounts that have come to us are to be trusted, was a disreputable person quite unworthy of the office. Ambrose in his own name, and that of other Western bishops assembled with him in council, wrote two urgent letters to the Emperor Theodosius, asking him to assemble a council to decide on these disputed elections. At first he proposed that the place of meeting should be Alexandria; afterwards, growing bolder, he asked for Rome. But he is careful to protest that he claims no right to determine the matter, but only desires that the bishop of Rome and the other Western bishops should be consulted in the matter. It is significant that in this Western attempt to in-

terfere in Eastern concerns no special claim is made for the bishop of Rome, nor is any right to decide on such disputes claimed for his see. In fact, the bishop of Rome appears to have been no party to this movement, for he was not an adherent of Maximus. The Easterns replied with the utmost civility,* but refused to go to the other end of the world to settle their domestic affairs; and actually arranged them with complete disregard of Western opinion. In this decision the West was forced to acquiesce.

What has been said sufficiently exhibits the necessity of classifying our witnesses geographically: for moderate as were the Western claims towards the end of the fourth century, as compared with what they afterwards grew to, they evidently found no justification in Eastern tradition. We have a graphic picture of Western contempt for the Easterns in a contemporary letter written by Jerome from Syria to Damasus of Rome. He had found the orthodox Church at Antioch greatly distracted not only by the rival pretensions of different claimants of the see, but also by disputes on the subject of the Trinity, though these, as it would seem, merely verbal. The question related to the use of the words ὑπόστασις and οὐσία; and it was disputed for instance whether it was proper to say that there are in the Godhead three 'hypostases.' On these questions Jerome has evidently very strongly made up his mind; but he is anxious to be able to produce an authoritative ruling in his favour by the bishop of Rome. So he writes a flattering letter to Damasus (*Ep.* 15), expressing the utmost scorn for the wretched Easterns. In the West the Sun of Righteousness was rising; in the East Lucifer, who had fallen, had set his throne above the stars; in the West was the fertile land bearing fruit a hundredfold; in the East the good grain was overrun with tares and darnel; in the West were the vessels of gold and silver, in the East those of wood and earth, destined to be broken by the rod of iron, or consumed with eternal fire. Jerome affects to be quite indifferent to the Eastern disputes. Paulinus, or Meletius, or Vitalis, were all alike to him; all he cared for was to adhere

* Theodoret, *H. E.* vii. 5.

to the chair of Peter, the Rock on which the Church was built. Let Damasus only tell him which competitor he ought to adhere to, and how it was right for him to express himself. Damasus, who no doubt well knew that Jerome had no need to be enlightened as to which candidate was recognized at Rome, appears to have been in no hurry to reply. So Jerome has to write again, more urgently imploring the shepherd to have pity on the perplexities of his wandering sheep. Jerome, as he got older, and learned to know the East better, abated a good deal of his youthful 'Chauvinism,' and his amusing letter would not need much notice if this specimen of Western conceit were not frequently cited as truly illustrating Patristic opinion as to the rightful claims of Rome.

If we want to know the true tradition of the early Church, we have no better evidence than the General Councils; so with a few remarks on their canons having reference to the present subject, I will conclude this Lecture. I may take for granted that you are familiar with the celebrated Nicene canon, 'Let the ancient customs prevail; with regard to Egypt, Libya, and Pentapolis, that the bishop of Alexandria should have authority over all these, since this is also customary for the bishop in Rome; and likewise in Antioch and the other provinces that the prerogatives of the Churches be preserved; so if any be made bishop without the consent of the metropolitan, the Council adjudges him to be no bishop.' The cause of this canon was certain schismatical proceedings on the part of an Egyptian bishop, Meletius. It is evident that the Council regarded the supremacy of Alexandria as then an old thing; and secondly that the Council treats this supremacy as quite parallel to that exercised elsewhere by the bishops of Rome and Antioch. There could not be a stronger implicit denial of the right of Rome to rule the whole Church, or to enjoy an exclusive privilege, than the use of such an argument as, The bishop of Rome has such and such powers in his neighbourhood, therefore the bishop of Alexandria ought to have the like in his. At the same time the right of Rome is acknowledged to rule the Churches in the immediate neighbourhood.

How far did that right extend? Rufinus, who translated these canons towards the end of the fourth century, says, Rome has the care of the suburbicarian Churches. Commentators differ as to what exactly this means. It is clear, however, that Rome had not patriarchal authority as yet over the whole West, as indeed is proved by the case of Apiarius, which has been already discussed. I have not time to tell at length of the struggles made by Rome from time to time to enlarge the bounds of her patriarchal authority. It may, however, be mentioned that the great schism between East and West grew out of disputes as to whether certain provinces belonged to the patriarchate of Rome or Constantinople. The two patriarchs felt a natural shame to confess that the cause of their solicitude was the money that would be diverted from their coffers if these provinces should be lost to them. Consequently differences of ritual or of doctrine, on points on which previous generations had been content to differ, were now first represented as soul-destroying errors; and the disputants declared themselves each to be solely moved by solicitude for the souls that would be imperilled if they were placed under the teaching of his rival. But all these struggles to increase the part of the Church over which Rome was to hold sway are perfectly inconsistent with her modern claim to dominion over the whole Church. The man who asked our Lord to command his brother to divide the inheritance, may have been covetous and grasping; but by the very words of his petition he precluded himself from asserting that he was the sole heir. If you complain that your share is not as large as it ought to be, and try to make it larger, you are still owning that you are entitled to a share, not the whole. Accordingly, at the present day Romanists do not count Rome as among the great patriarchates of the Church, and they are quite consistent in not doing so, and in treating the patriarchal office as inferior to that held by the Pope; but the ancient Church, even when it came to recognize the bishop of Rome as the great patriarch of the West, implicitly denied his jurisdiction over the whole Church.

To pass now to the second General Council. One of the Constantinopolitan canons forbids the bishops at the head of the great ecclesiastical divisions to meddle out of their own provinces, or throw the Churches into confusion; but that according to the canons the bishop of Alexandria should alone administer the affairs of Egypt, the bishops of the East those of the East, and so on. No mention of Rome is made in this canon, which deals only with Eastern affairs, but Roman claims to Eastern dominion are sufficiently condemned by the silence of the canon, there being apparently no necessity even to reject such pretensions.

What the Council would be willing to grant to the bishop of Rome appears from what they granted to the bishop of Constantinople. They did not give him any right to meddle out of his own province, but they said that he should have precedency *of honour* (τὰ πρεσβεία τῆς τιμῆς) next after the bishop of Rome, because his city was new Rome.

This decree of Constantinople was read at Chalcedon, and the Council voted, 'We recognize the canon just read, and do ourselves adopt the same determination respecting the precedence of the most holy Church of Constantinople, new Rome, for the fathers naturally assigned precedence to the see of the elder Rome, because that city was imperial; and taking the same point of view the one hundred and fifty pious bishops awarded the same precedence to the most holy see of new Rome, judging with good reason that the city which was honoured with the sovereignty and the senate, and which enjoyed the same precedence with the elder imperial Rome, should also in matters ecclesiastical be dignified like her, as being second after her.' So far the decree might seem to give but honorary precedence, but it went on to say, 'so that the metropolitans of Pontus, Asia, and Thrace, should be ordained by the archbishop of Constantinople, these metropolitans to ordain the comprovincial bishops.' When this canon was proposed the Roman legates, evidently discerning that it would not be liked in Rome, said that they had had no instructions from home on this subject, and therefore withdrew; but the canon was passed in their

absence. When the legates next day protested, and asked that the decree should be rescinded, their demand was refused. When word was brought to Rome of what had been done, Leo was exceedingly angry, and refused to recognize the new canon, professing great solicitude for the dignity of the ancient sees of Alexandria and Antioch—founded, as he said, the one by Peter's disciple Mark, the other by Peter himself before he went to Rome—a line of argument which effectively maintained the superior claims of Rome itself. In his resistance the bishop of Rome might count on sympathy not only from these sees, but also from those whose metropolitans were in future to be consecrated in Constantinople instead of in their own province. It is worthy of remark that the ground on which Leo asserts the nullity of the canons is not their having been passed without his consent, but their being in opposition to the decrees of Nicæa, which he said would last to the end of the world, and which no subsequent assembly of bishops, however numerous, had power to alter.* But in spite of Roman protests the canon remained firm; Constantinople retained the rank assigned to it, and after long unavailing struggle Rome was forced to recognize the existing facts. The Quinisext Council, 681, confirmed all the Chalcedon canons without exception, and the Council of Florence formally renewed the order established by Chalcedon, with Constantinople second.

To what a height Constantinople grew may be judged from the title of Ecumenical or universal bishop, about which there was such amusing controversy at the end of the sixth century. In the grandiloquent language of the East it did not mean all that the word would in strictness convey; and the bishop of Constantinople would probably have allowed that there might be more universal bishops than one; but Gregory the Great, taking it literally, was shocked at what

* Leo, in like manner, rejected the ambitious claims, already mentioned, of Juvenal of Jerusalem, on the ground that they were an infringement of the Nicene canon. But though Juvenal did not succeed in obtaining everything he had wished for, the question of the claims of Jerusalem was dealt with as an entirely open one by the Council of Chalcedon, and that see then permanently secured a higher position than Nicæa had given it.

he called a proud and foolish word; declared that the assumption of it was an imitation of the devil, who exalted himself above his fellow angels; that it was unlike the behaviour of St. Peter, who, although first of the Apostles, did not pretend to be more than of the same class with the rest, and that this piece of arrogance was a token of Antichrist's speedy coming. I call this amusing on account of the laughable shifts to which Roman divines are reduced in their efforts to reconcile this language with the assumption of the same title and all it denotes, by Gregory's successors.

XXII.

THE INFALLIBILITY OF THE POPE.

ALTHOUGH the question of the Infallibility of the Pope is that with which I am directly concerned in this course of Lectures, yet in treating of the matter historically I have found it necessary, before entering on the discussion of it, to trace the growth of Roman Supremacy; because the claim to Infallibility was the last stage in the progress of Roman ambition. First, there was but the readily acknowledged claim to honourable precedence among Churches; then there was the claim to command, first over neighbouring Churches, afterwards over more distant ones; last of all came the idea of Infallibility. It was not necessarily suggested by the claim to sovereignty, for the most rightful of human rulers is not exempt from occasional errors; but the notion was suggested by the exemption which Rome seemed to enjoy from the calamities which befel other principal sees. At the third General Council the bishop of Constantinople was deposed for heresy; at the fourth the bishop of Alexandria. Other sees were, in like manner, at times occupied by men whom the later Church repudiated as heretics. Probably the true explanation why it was long before the name of heretic permanently attached itself to any bishop of Rome is, that the side supported by the powerful influence of Rome always had the best chance of triumphing, and so of escaping the stigma of heresy which the defeated party incurred. At one time, indeed, it seemed for a moment that things might turn out differently; for on the temporary triumph of Eutychianism at the Robber Synod of A.D. 429, the bishop of Rome was excommunicated as a heretic; but by the opportune

death of the Emperor the cloud blew over, and this piece of impudence was regarded as only aggravating the guilt of the Alexandrian. Thus, then, it was not until after some five centuries, during which the 'Chair of Peter' escaped any permanent stain of heresy, that the idea suggested itself that this exemption was a privilege conferred in answer to our Saviour's prayer that Peter's faith should not fail. We have now to inquire how far the belief in such a privilege is justified by facts; and we must also examine whether the bishop of Rome has really discharged the office of teacher and guide to the Church, which it is imagined was conferred on him.

I have already (p. 385) spoken of the charge of heresy brought by Hippolytus against Zephyrinus and Callistus. Döllinger's is the only way of meeting that case which saves the doctrine of Papal Infallibility. An attempted proof that the accused bishops were really orthodox would leave the reply still open, at least Hippolytus regarded it as a possible thing that the bishop of Rome might be a heretic. But if Hippolytus did not regard Callistus as bishop of Rome, no use can be made of the case in the present controversy.

I pass over minor matters and come at once to the great Arian controversy. I have already remarked that Constantine clearly knew nothing of the idea that the bishop of Rome was the appointed teacher and guide of the Church; for if that had been the accepted belief of the Church of the day, the Emperor could not but have heard of it; and, being most anxious to suppress controversy, and to give peace to the Church, he would not have adopted the costly expedient of a Council, but would have used the simpler method of obtaining a ruling from the bishop of Rome, if he had any reason to think that the Church would accept that ruling as decisive. But the history of these Arian disputes affords a painful proof that this controversy, at least, was not settled by the bishop of Rome. I allude to the fall of Liberius. The case being a celebrated one, it may be well to delay a little on it, and to state without exaggeration what the real amount of this fall was.

Liberius, to his credit, made at first a noble resistance to

the pressure put on him by the Arian Emperor Constantius.* He defied his threats and submitted to exile; but in his banishment he was purposely insulated from other confessors. His Church at Rome was committed to another, Felix, who was consecrated by three Arian bishops. And it was this which seems more than anything else to have wrought on the constancy of Liberius—the being separated from his see, and knowing that his place there was occupied by another. After two years' banishment he seems willing to submit to anything in order to obtain restoration. St. Jerome tells us that Fortunatian, bishop of Aquileia, who had lapsed into Arianism, seduced him and constrained him to the subscription of heresy. He became the bearer of the letter of Liberius to the Emperor. The heretical creed was offered to Liberius by Demophilus of Constantinople, one of the worst of the Arians. Liberius writes to the Arians as his most beloved brethren the presbyters and his fellow-bishops, the bishops of the East. He apologizes to the bishops for ever having defended Athanasius, on the ground that bishop Julius, his predecessor, had so done; 'but having learned,' he says, 'when it pleased God, that you have condemned him justly, I assented to your sentence. So, then, Athanasius being removed from the communion of us all, so that I am not even to receive his letters, I say that I am quite at peace and concord with you all, and with all the Eastern bishops throughout the provinces. But that you may know better that in this letter I speak in true faith the same as my common lord and brother, Demophilus, who was so good as to vouchsafe to exhibit your Catholic creed, which at Sirmium was by many of our brethren and fellow-bishops considered set forth and received by all present: this I received with willing mind, contradicted in nothing. To it I gave my assent: this I follow; this is held by me.' St. Hilary interrupts the account thrice with the words, 'This is Arian faithlessness;' 'anathema, I say to thee, Liberius and thy associates;' 'again, and a third time, anathema to the

* In the following I abridge the story as told in Pusey's *Councils of the Church*, p. 168.

prevaricator Liberius.' Time compels me to omit another letter of Liberius, still more miserable, in which he puts himself expressly in communion with the whole Arian and semi-Arian party in the East and West, even with the worst of the Arians, out of communion with all who rejected the Arians, speaks of Athanasius as one who *was* bishop of Alexandria, and entreats his own restoration to Rome through the heads of the persecuting Arian party.

It is certain that to obtain restoration Liberius signed an Arian creed, made at Sirmium. St. Hilary calls it Arian perfidy; St. Jerome heretical pravity. There were, however, three creeds known as Sirmian; and there is no evidence which of the three it was that Liberius signed. Roman Catholics assert that it was the most nearly orthodox of the three, without any proof except that they would prefer the fact to be so. Anti-Romanists say that Liberius was at the time in a mood to sign anything to obtain restoration, and that of course the Arians would insist on his signing whatever would suit their purpose best. For myself, I think that it is of no importance which he signed, and that his signing means no more than communicating with the Arians, which it is certain he did. You will remember that the Arians were struggling for comprehension, and that they were willing to use extremely high language concerning our Lord's dignity. The worst of their formulæ did not assert anything untrue, but merely omitted the phrases which the orthodox used to exclude the Arians. For instance, if Liberius signed the worst of the Sirmian formulæ, he would only have had to say that we do not worship two gods; that our Lord said, 'My Father is greater than I,' and that the word 'homoöusios' is not in Scripture.

Imagine that the anti-supernaturalist party got complete ascendance over the English Crown and Parliament; that they struck out of the English Prayerbook every assertion of the divinity of our Lord; that they made bishops of Mr. Voysey and some of the leading Unitarians; deposed and imprisoned the most formidable of the orthodox bishops, not on a charge of heresy, but of riot and sedition; that they put the arch-

bishop of Canterbury into prison, and required his subscription to the Unitarian creed; suppose that after a couple of years' imprisonment, finding that a leading Broad Church clergyman was about to be permanently fixed in his see, he yielded so far as to acknowledge Voysey as his dear brother bishop, and to disavow all connexion with the orthodox bishop who had been deposed; would it make much difference more or less whether he at the same time signed a formula declaring that our Lord was perfect man, that his life had been a model of excellence, and his doctrines unsurpassed in purity—but saying nothing about his divinity?

This consideration that the fault of Liberius was not so much the 'assertio falsi' as the 'suppressio veri,' demolishes at once one of the apologies made for his prevarication, namely, that he erred only as a private doctor, and not as the teacher of the Church. Exactly the opposite I believe to be the case. I do not think there is any evidence to lead us to think that in his private capacity he thought less highly of our Lord than any of us do. In his heart, I doubt not, he condemned Arianism. It was in his official letters, addressed to all the bishops of the East, and intended for publication by them, that he gave to Arianism all the weight of his official position, treating the questions that had been raised about our Saviour's person as matters on which different opinions might be held without necessitating any breach of communion. Take, however, the most favourable view of his conduct, and it is plain that in the Arian dispute it was not the bishop of Rome who was the teacher and guide of the Church: that duty was performed by Athanasius, the bishop of Alexandria.

This schism between Felix and Liberius has introduced a good deal of perplexity into Church history. Notwithstanding the bad auspices under which Felix was introduced, he appears to have been a good man, and to have had a considerable following. He had been archdeacon, and it was usually the archdeacon who succeeded to the bishopric. After the death of Liberius, the ultra-orthodox refused to accept anyone as bishop who had taken the side of Felix;

and this one of the candidates, Damasus, had done, the candidate who was ultimately successful, and to whom Jerome addresses the most highflown language as to the dignity of his see. He was opposed by Ursinus, and the scenes of riot were so great as to surpass anything we now know of in the most stormy election contest. One Sunday over a hundred dead bodies were taken out of the church where a contest had been going on. With the success of the party of Damasus the memory of Felix became gradually purified from the taint of heresy. The series of Roman pontiffs now includes a Felix II., who is honoured as a saint and martyr. How to fit in his history has puzzled historians; but the most learned believe that he is no other than the antagonist of Liberius.

We come down now a little later, to the Pelagian controversy, and have to inquire whether it was the bishop of Rome who, on the questions then at issue, taught the Church how to believe. She had much need of guidance, for she had been perplexed by contrary decisions. An African council had condemned Pelagius; but he had been pronounced orthodox by another council at Diospolis, in Palestine. The African bishops appealed to Rome, and obtained Pope Innocent's approval of their decisions. But a letter and confession of faith, which Pelagius sent to Rome, did not arrive until after Innocent's death, and the question came for further hearing before his successor, Zosimus. Cælestius, the doctrinal ally of Pelagius, appeared in person at Rome, and, having made his profession of faith, was carefully cross-examined by the Pope. It is possible that there may have been something in the early training of Zosimus to dispose him favourably to the accused; for his Greek name suggests that he may have been of Eastern extraction, and the Fathers of the Eastern Church have always accentuated man's freewill more strongly than St. Augustine taught the West to do. Whether this be so or not, Zosimus arrived at the conclusion that Cælestius and Pelagius had been unjustly accused; and he wrote to the African bishops two letters expressing this opinion—the first after his interview with Cælestius, the other after receiving

the letter of Pelagius. He strongly censures the two bishops, Heros and Lazarus, who had played the part of accusers, describing them as turbulent mischiefmakers, whose own election to the episcopate had been annulled, and whom he had excommunicated. He lectures the African bishops on the duty of not being hasty in believing evil of their neighbours: he tells them that they need be no more ashamed of retracting a condemnation hastily pronounced than those who had condemned the chaste Susanna were of acquitting her after her innocence had been established by Daniel: that if there was joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, there ought to be still more joy on discovering that one who had been supposed to have sinned had not sinned at all. He only wishes they could have been present to hear the professions of Cælestius and Pelagius. Those who had been there had been moved almost to tears that men of such perfect orthodoxy ('absolutæ fidei') should have been so unjustly defamed. Notwithstanding, the African bishops stood firm, and in full council passed canons condemning anew the Pelagian errors. Nor did they rely on spiritual weapons only; for an interference of the civil power was obtained, subjecting Pelagius and his adherents to severe penalties, including that of banishment. Then the Pope gave way, and by timely yielding has escaped the stigma of heresy. The accepted Roman Catholic theory is that Zosimus was an orthodox man who, although he fancied he had fully examined into the question, had allowed his simplicity to be imposed on by the cunning of the heretics, until the clear-sighted African bishops set him straight. Suppose we accept this view, yet still we must ask the question, Who then fulfilled the office of guide to the Church? Was it the Pope who taught the African bishops, or they who taught him? When I observe how they refused to accept the voice of the oracle until the oracle had given the answer they desired, I am reminded of having heard of a man who never trusted his judgment when he had to make a practical decision, but always tossed up. If the result agreed with his own inclinations he acted on it confidently, feeling that he was not

gratifying his own wishes, but obeying the guidance of the lot. If the result was not what he liked, he tossed again.

The only one of the great controversies in which the Pope really did his part in teaching Christians what to believe was the Eutychian controversy. Leo the Great, instead of waiting, as Popes usually do, till the question was settled, published his sentiments at the beginning, and his letter to Flavian was adopted at the Council of Chalcedon. This is what would have always happened if God had really made the Pope the guide to the Church; but this case is quite exceptional, resulting from the accident that Leo was a good theologian, besides being a man of great vigour of character. No similar influence was exercised either by his predecessors or his successors; and I have already remarked that Leo failed to settle the question. In the West, indeed, his authority was decisive, but in the East his opinion was accepted only by those who had been of the same opinion before; and Chalcedon and Leo's letter enjoyed only a precarious and fluctuating ascendency.

If the Pope appears to advantage in the history of the fourth General Council, there is a lamentable downfall when we come to that of the fifth. I have already remarked that there was a reversal of parts between the third and fourth Councils, several, such as Theodoret, who had narrowly escaped condemnation as Nestorians, taking a leading part at Chalcedon. What may be called the rationalistic section was defeated at the former and triumphed at the latter. This was very shocking to the Alexandrians. I referred before to attempts made to unite the Monophysites with the Eastern Church, by making an entirely new statement of orthodox doctrine, and throwing overboard Chalcedon and Leo's letter altogether. That such attempts should be made, and with some apparent hopes of success, shows how little the infallibility of Pope or Council was believed in in the East. The Popes naturally resisted these attempts, and, being politically independent of the Eastern empire, were able to make their opposition effectual; but in the sixth century the Eastern emperor, Justinian, made himself master of Italy; and what followed

may lead us to judge how little the dream of Roman Infallibility would have been likely to have arisen, if it had not been for the removal of the seat of empire to Constantinople, which left the Pope for centuries to reign at Rome without rival or superior. Justinian imagined that he might be able to reconcile the Monophysites by condemning, not indeed Chalcedon, but some of those leading divines whose orthodoxy Chalcedon had admitted, but who were specially obnoxious to the Monophysite party. It was naturally disliked in the West that the verdict of the great Council which they accepted should be reviewed and reversed, even though the point in question were not the general statement of doctrine, but only the pronouncing on the orthodoxy of individuals. The African bishops stoutly resisted. The Pope showed the greatest reluctance to join, but, under the powerful pressure which the Emperor put on him, he wriggled and twisted in the most humiliating way, trying to please both parties—the Emperor and his Western brethren—and with the usual result of pleasing neither. It was not until after his name had been struck out of the diptychs by the Council that he yielded a tardy and undignified assent. I have so little sympathy with the trial of men for heresy a hundred years after their death that I have never cared to form an opinion of my own whether the writings condemned by the fifth Council deserved the censure passed on them. But as the acts of the Council received the confirmation of the Pope, and are now recognized by the Roman Church, we must assume that the Council was in the right all through. What respect can we have then for Vigilius, as guide to the Church, who resisted the Council as long as resistance was possible; who held the same relation to it of late and reluctant assent, as Eusebius of Cæsarea held to the Council of Nicæa, or Theodoret to that of Ephesus?

It might seem that the claims of the Pope to be the guide of the Church could hardly fall lower than at the fifth Council; but lower they did fall at the sixth. In the acts of that Council, after anathematizing other Monothelite heretics, they proceed 'with these we likewise provide that Honorius,

who was bishop of Rome, should be cast forth from the Church of God, and anathematized; because we find by his writings to Sergius that he followed his mind in all things, and confirmed his impious dogmas.' In another part of the proceedings, where the heretics and their patrons are anathematized by name, we have, 'Anathema to the heretic Theodorus; anathema to the heretic Cyrus, anathema to the heretic Honorius;' and this anathema is repeated in two or three other parts of the proceedings. Further, there is an epistle of Pope Leo II. confirming the acts of this General Council, in which, after anathematizing Theodore, Cyrus, Sergius, and others, he adds, 'also Honorius, who did not illuminate this apostolic see with the doctrine of apostolic tradition, but permitted her who was undefiled to be polluted by profane teaching.' This condemnation is repeated in the second Council of Nicæa, counted by Roman Catholics as the seventh General; and the adversaries of images are classed with Arius Macedonius, Apollinarius, Nestorius, Honorius, and all their pestilent crew. The Council reckoned as the eighth General also condemns Honorius. The profession of faith made by the Popes on their day of election, from the sixth to the ninth century, contains a profession of assent to the anathema passed by the fathers of the sixth General Council on the other Monothelites, and 'on Honorius, who fomented their detestable teaching.'

The condemnation of Honorius was inserted in the Roman breviaries down to the end of the sixteenth century. It has been left out of those published since; but this mere attempt to drop his condemnation out of sight is not enough for the present generation. In our day, when all the villains of history have been whitewashed, it might be expected that some attempt would be made to rehabilitate Pope Honorius, even if his case were not a formidable stumbling-block in the way of a popular theory. The first attempts were somewhat inconsistent with each other. Honorius was never condemned: he was condemned unjustly: he was condemned only as a private doctor; he was censured, not as a heretic, but only as not having been sufficiently energetic in putting down heresy. The

letters attributed to him are forged; they are perfectly orthodox.

Of the defences made at the present day by the advocates of infallibility, the first to be examined is the assertion that the Pope, in the letters which have been censured, did not teach *ex cathedra*, inasmuch as it does not appear that these letters had been read in a synod of Italian bishops, nor do they bear marks of being addressed to the universal Church. The point here raised is an important one, and it is not really a digression from the case of Honorius if I delay to give a full discussion of it. Everyone can understand that there is a clear distinction between legal decisions pronounced by a judge on the bench and opinions on points of law which he may have expressed in private conversation. So we readily admit that, supposing the Pope to possess the gift of Infallibility, that attribute is not to be expected to attach to things occasionally said by him in his private capacity, and not in that of public teacher of the Church. But this is no justification for a number of arbitrary rules which have been invented for distinguishing when the Pope speaks *ex cathedra*—rules as to which the advocates of Infallibility have been able to come to no agreement.* And yet it has been necessary to invent such rules, in order to relieve the papal see of the responsibility of a number of decisions which everyone owns to be erroneous. To my mind, the only common-sense view is, that the Pope speaks *ex cathedra* whenever he clearly speaks in his official capacity: that is to say, whenever, either spontaneously, or in answer to questions addressed to him as Pope, he publishes in writing his decisions on a question of doctrine. If you try beyond this to introduce conditions for *ex cathedra* utterances, these are mere crotchets of theologians. The case is just the same as if a physician set up to be infallible, and, after a number of patients had died under his treatment, you endeavoured to frame a set of rules, distinguishing by the kind of

* I remember that at the time of the Vatican Council, one of the opponents of the dogma of the Pope's personal infallibility declared himself willing to acknowledge that the Pope was infallible when he speaks *ex cathedra*, only he was not convinced that since our Lord's time any Pope ever had spoken *ex cathedra*.

paper they were written on, or the manner in which he had affixed his signature, the prescriptions in which he was to be regarded as speaking as a private person from those which he had given as the infallible physician. I need not speak, then, of arbitrary rules, such as that the decree should be affixed to the door of St. Peter's, or any other, as to the observance of which Christian people in general would have no evidence.

One theory made it necessary to an *ex cathedra* utterance that the decree should be made in council. In point of fact, the earliest papal decisions were always so made. The reason of this was that the Pope's personal authority was not, in early times, so strong that he could afford not to back it up with the opinion of others. When the Pope sent his decision to the East, for instance, he used to summon previously a Council of all the bishops within reach, so that he might speak in their name as well as in his own. This conciliar form, belonging to many of the earlier papal utterances, has been imitated in later times by papal allocutions being addressed, in the first instance, to an assembly of cardinals or other bishops. But it is clearly inconsistent with modern ideas of papal infallibility to make the presence of a Council necessary. Suppose some of the Council should not agree, would the decree be less binding? If the Council added nothing to the authority of the decree, why summon them to hear what might in no way concern them?

Another theory made it necessary that the Pope should have duly deliberated about the matter in hand, and have taken the advice of theologians and learned doctors, for it was notorious, it was said, that many Popes have been very ignorant, and that without the use of such means their opinions would not be entitled to regard. But it was soon seen that the gift of infallibility would be worthless if any such condition were attached to its exercise. It might be very proper and right that the Pope, before announcing his decision, should take advice. Pius IX., I have already told you, did so before defining the dogma of the Immaculate Conception. But, plainly, his authority would be worth nothing if those to

whom his decrees were addressed were entitled to inquire whether or not he had used these human means to guide his judgment. Clearly their duty as obedient subjects is to take for granted that he has done everything that is right.

Received Roman Catholic theory does, indeed, recognize one case where the absence of sufficient care deprives papal utterances of the attribute of infallibility: it is held that the 'obiter dicta' in such an utterance may be erroneous. This distinction prevails in our own law courts. Though the judgment of a Court of Appeal binds inferior courts, yet if the judges in pronouncing sentence express an opinion on a subject not immediately before them, that goes for nothing, it being possible that if they had heard the question properly argued they might have changed their sentiments. Thus, Pope Nicolas I. was consulted by the Bulgarians whether a Jew or a Pagan could give valid baptism. He replied in the affirmative, but further volunteered the information that the baptism would be equally good, whether given in the name of Jesus alone or in that of the Three Persons of the Trinity.* This is now given up as clearly erroneous teaching, but is excused as an 'obiter dictum,' the Pope having gone out of his way to answer a question he had not been asked. It seems to me that the analogy to our law courts does not hold. Judges who decide by human wisdom may go wrong for want of adequate use of human means to guide and inform their judgments. But if the Holy Spirit inspire the sentence He cannot be supposed dependent on these human means; and if information is given which had not been asked for, this surely ought to be attributed to the Holy Spirit's special direction, and to be received with all the more reverence. The Pope's authority would fail to be decisive in disputes if the parties are to be at liberty to pull his sentence to pieces, and decide how much of it they will receive.

Now, as regards this particular case, remember that the Roman Church holds that an unbaptized person cannot enter the kingdom of Heaven, and that baptism in the name of Jesus alone is not valid. It follows that if the Bulgarians

* *Respons. ad consult. Bulg.* civ., Mansi. xv., 431.

accepted the instruction officially given them by the Pope, hundreds of them may have imagined themselves baptized when they really were not, and then, for want of baptism, their souls must have been eternally lost. Now, it seems to me monstrous to imagine that anyone could be damned for following the guidance of him whom Christ had appointed as teacher of the Church. So that if I believed the Pope to hold this office, I should find myself constrained to believe that the ruling of Nicolas was right. No evasion as to the form in which the instruction was conveyed will suffice. If the Pope be Christ's vicar, it is incredible that he could be permitted officially to mislead His people into error inconsistent with their salvation.

The Vatican Council of 1870 made what must be regarded as an attempt to answer the long unsettled question, What is the test of an *ex cathedra* utterance? It declared that the Pope speaks *ex cathedra* 'when, performing his office of pastor and doctor of all Christians, in virtue of his apostolic authority, he defines a doctrine concerning faith or morals to be held by the universal Church.' The condition here indicated is derived from Bellarmine, who makes it a condition for an *ex cathedra* decree that it should be addressed to the whole Church, or that it should proclaim a moral law to the whole Church. All these conditions are generally invented in order to save the Church from being bound by some palpably erroneous papal decisions. Thus, Eugenius IV., in his instruction to the Armenians, to be found annexed to the Acts of the Council of Florence, explains the doctrine of the Seven Sacraments. Now, not to speak of other points in which his teaching is now owned to be erroneous, he lays down that the matter and form of the sacrament of Orders is the delivery of the vessels, together with certain words. But as this rite and the words in question were never used in the Church for the first thousand years and more, it would follow, if this were correct, that the Church for so long a time had no valid Orders—a consequence which makes it necessary that the doctrine of Eugenius shall in some way be taken out of the category of *ex cathedra* decisions. Yet it is obviously

a most unfair limitation to papal infallibility to maintain that the appointed guide to Christians collectively is unable to conduct them safely if they consult him individually. Really believe that the Pope is an infallible guide, and nothing but the controversial exigency of relieving yourself from assent to certain erroneous papal decisions could induce you to put such a limitation on the office entrusted to him by Christ. But, further, this measure of relief to weak consciences is altogether too sweeping in its application. For over a thousand years of the Church's history no single decree of a Pope addressed to the universal Church is known. The Bull, 'Unam Sanctam,' of Pope Boniface VIII., in 1303, is the first addressed to the whole Church. I told you how a Jesuit writer urged it as an unanswerable reply to Dr. Pusey's theory of infallibility, that his condition that the Church should be undivided makes it necessary to maintain that the gift has been dormant for the last 1200 years—that is to say, for two-thirds of the lifetime of the Church. And surely the objection is just as fatal if it was for the *first* 1200 years the gift was dormant, and if it were only in comparatively modern times that the Pope awoke to the exercise of his full powers.

To apply all this to the case of Honorius, if the defence be made for him that his erroneous doctrine was not propounded *ex cathedra*, the only distinction in this matter that I can recognize as rational is that between the Pope's official and non-official utterances; and in this Monothelite controversy the Pope's sentiments were undoubtedly expressed officially. The Eastern patriarchs would have troubled themselves little about the opinion of a private Italian divine named Honorius; but it was of the utmost importance to know what line would be taken by the bishop of Rome. But we need the less contest this point, as it would pain the papal advocates of the present day to acknowledge that Honorius, even in his private capacity, was a heretic; and they maintain that the letters of Honorius are quite orthodox. Perhaps that may be my own opinion; but not the less do I protest against Dr. Manning and his coadjutors committing such an audacious exercise of private judgment as to approve as orthodox letters which

were burnt as heretical by the sixth General Council, condemned by the two succeeding Councils, and by all the Popes for centuries in their solemn profession of faith on their day of installation.

In our times, when so many unfavourable judgments of history are reversed or mitigated, it was only natural that the heretics of old should get the benefit of the same court of appeal. Many of them are only known to us by the writings of their opponents, men often most bitterly prejudiced against them and incapable of giving them what we should count fair play. Often, no doubt, they were made answerable for consequences which, whether truly following from their premisses or not, they themselves repudiated. The subjects in debate were often most abstruse, the terminology most difficult; and it is quite possible that in some cases the differences were only verbal, and that men were counted as heretics who did not really differ from the orthodox so much in faith as in their manner of expressing themselves. I can well believe that some who are counted as bad heretics were worthy, well-meaning men, who had puzzled their heads with bad metaphysics, on subjects which the human understanding is ill able to grasp. Perhaps a Roman Catholic will say that it is because I am a heretic myself that I am inclined to think not very ill of heretics; and if I feel bound to class Pope Honorius under that denomination, I do not at all think unfavourably of him on the whole, nor am I disposed to deny that, heretic as he was, he may have been a very worthy man and a very good Christian.

In fact, I count that there are no heretics better entitled to charitable apologies than the Monothelites. Christianity was at the time fearfully weakened in the East by internal divisions on the question concerning our Lord's twofold nature. If by any mutual explanation union could be restored, undoubtedly the greatest benefit would be conferred on the Church. Now the most orthodox defender of Christ's twofold nature would grant, that in His sinless humanity there was not that conflict of two wills which we experience, but that in His case the 'law of the members' was

in complete subjection to 'the law of the mind.' On the other hand, it seemed that all the Monophysites were contending for might be satisfied by an explicit recognition of the perfect harmony between our Lord's two natures. Thus there seemed to be a hopeful prospect of compromise, on the terms that both parties should agree in recognizing in our Lord a single will. The plan appeared for the moment successful; the Monophysites largely assented; the emperor adopted the scheme, and it was agreed to by the patriarchs of the four great sees—Rome, Constantinople, Alexandria, and Antioch. The patriarch of Jerusalem alone held out, and by his strenuous opposition overturned the compromise. Certainly, then, on this occasion it was he, and not the bishop of Rome, who was the teacher of the Church.

The feeling of the present day on the question whether we ought to say that our Lord had a single will or two harmonious wills would be to condemn more strongly the raising of the question than the determining it wrongly. The majority, I imagine, have rather a Carbonarian faith in the Church's doctrine on this subject; and if they had been told that it was the Dithelites whom they were to condemn as heretics, would have been equally ready to assent. There is a sense in which Monothelism is certainly inconsistent with the truth of our Lord's twofold nature; and we must therefore rejoice that Sophronius of Jerusalem prevented the adoption of a formula which might have tended to undermine the doctrine of the Incarnation; but whether the heretical sense was that in which the doctrine was held by Sergius and other leading Monothelites is more than I will undertake to say. I have no harsh inclination to repel any excuses that may be offered for any of them; but I see no reason for making any special exemption in favour of Honorius, or separating his case from that of other Monothelites. One cannot do so without directly contradicting the sixth General Council, which declared that Honorius 'in all things had followed the opinions of Sergius and had sanctioned his impious dogmas.'

But the truth is, we have no interest whatever in debating the personal orthodoxy of Honorius, or in trying him for

heresy twelve centuries after his death. The question which has importance for our times is not whether this or that Pope was a heretic, but whether it is possible for a Pope to be a heretic. The case of Honorius shows that as late as the seventh century no suspicion had entered the mind of the Church that it was not. We need not go behind the acclamations of the Council, 'Anathema to the heretic Sergius, anathema to the heretic Honorius.' If these anathemas are not conclusive against the individual, they are conclusive against the Pope. They prove to demonstration that whether Honorius personally deserved condemnation or not, his official position was not regarded in men's minds then, either as securing him against the possibility of falling into heresy, or as protecting him against condemnation if he did.

For another reason, the question concerning the personal orthodoxy of Honorius or any other Pope is one with which we have the very slightest concern. When it was suggested that we might content ourselves with the guidance of the Holy Scriptures, Romanist advocates have replied, that though the Bible may be infallible it is not an infallible guide: that is to say, it does not protect those who follow it from danger of going wrong. Surely now we may say as much for the Pope. Let him be infallible if you please; let him be in his heart of the most admirable orthodoxy, still he is not an infallible guide if by his public utterances he leads Christian people wrong. If a guide misconduct us, it is not the least comfort to us to be told that this man has really a most thorough knowledge of the passes, and before being admitted as guide had passed a most brilliant examination. Now it is beyond controversy that cases have occurred when Christian people would have gone wrong if they followed the guidance of the bishop of Rome. Liberius may in his heart have had infallible knowledge that Athanasius was in the right and his opponents vile heretics; but the Christian world was not concerned with the thoughts of Liberius but with his acts; and they who were guided by *them* would find themselves ranged against Athanasius and on the side of his opponents. And not to go through a host of other cases, at which I have glanced already,

where the Christian world avoided heresy by following some guidance different from that of the bishop of Rome, Honorius may have had in his heart, if you choose to say so, the most orthodox abhorrence of Monothelism. But all this supposed internal orthodoxy does not alter the fact that in his capacity of guide he did all that in him lay to lead the Christian world into that heresy. So it remains proved that even if it were possible to demonstrate that no bishop of Rome had ever entertained sentiments that were not most rigidly orthodox, still the Pope is not an infallible *guide*.

XXIII.

THE POPE'S TEMPORAL POWER.

ANYONE who has read enough of Roman Catholic periodical literature, within the last ten or twenty years, to become familiar with their internal controversies, will know something of the disputes between the 'maximizers' and the 'minimizers';* the latter party being anxious to reduce to a minimum the system of doctrine to which the Church's Infallibity was to be regarded as pledged; setting aside as not spoken *ex cathedra* a number of Papal utterances which, in the judgment of their opponents, could not be disregarded without falling into the sin of heresy. In fact, a Roman Catholic who has to engage in controversy with Protestants naturally dislikes to weaken his position by extending it too much, and therefore is glad to represent himself as not bound to defend any doctrines to which the Church's Infallibility is not clearly pledged. But if he were suspected by a loyal member of his own communion of not believing those doctrines which he has declined to defend, he would certainly be set forth as a bad Catholic. If I chose to pursue further the subject of Papal Infallibility, I could easily swell the list of decisions made by papal authority which are now acknowledged to be erroneous. In each of these cases Roman Catholic apologists are forced to make excuses in different ways, trying to show that the attribute of Infallibility did not attach to the erroneous decision. But the general result is that, while Roman Catholics are now mainly agreed on the principle

* This was written several years ago, and as I have not kept up my reading of Roman Catholic periodicals, I really don't know how far the Vatican Council succeeded in putting an end to these disputes.

that the Pope is infallible, the greatest differences of opinion will be found among them as to whether any particular papal utterance is infallible; and any Roman Catholic who does not like to accept any decision of the Pope need have no difficulty in producing a parallel case of some previous decision, to all appearance possessing the same claims to reverence, but which is now acknowledged to have been wrong. So that, in short, I do not know how to sum up the Roman Catholic doctrine on this subject except by the formula, The Pope is always infallible, except when he makes a mistake.

I will not trouble you with the case of such an extreme maximizer as one who, a little time ago, insisted, in defiance of his ecclesiastical superiors, that Roman Catholics are still bound by the Pope's decrees against the motion of the earth; for it may be considered that the earth has had the Pope's permission to move since the year 1821, when the prohibition against Copernican books was removed from the Index. But there have been later papal decrees, concerning the obligation of accepting which there has been much controversy among Roman Catholics.

If all the official utterances of a Pope are to be regarded as authoritative, no Pope has given more employment to the believers in his Infallibility than Pius IX. found occasion to do in his long pontificate. The most remarkable was the encyclical 'Quanta Cura,' published on the 8th December, 1864, which was accompanied by a syllabus containing extracts from previous allocutions of the Pope condemning eighty false doctrines. Dr. Newman, who had been always an extreme minimizer, laboured hard to relieve himself from the obligation of accepting this syllabus. It was not signed by the Pope himself, but only by his officials; therefore if you accepted the accompanying encyclical, you might reject the syllabus. Thus the authority of the eighty articles rested only on the several allocutions in which they were first contained; and then Dr. Newman tried, by examining the special occasion on which each condemnation was delivered, to limit its application to some particular case. All this special pleading is as offensive to a thoroughgoing Papalist like

Manning as it is unsuccessful in the judgment of outsiders like ourselves. It is plain enough that here the Pope has selected a number of his judgments in individual cases, and has made them into general principles for the instruction of the universal Church. They are principles of which the party who predominated at the Vatican Council are not in the least ashamed; and it was generally understood that if the sittings of that Council had been prolonged, they would have been formulated in such a way as to receive the sanction of the Council. In fact, my own copy of them forms part of the proceedings of the Vatican Council brought out by a Roman Catholic publisher 'Cum permissu superiorum,' where the Encyclical and the Syllabus hold the first place in the 'Acta publica quibus concilium Vaticanum præparatùm est.'

Now in this Syllabus the proposition is condemned (77) that in our age it is no longer expedient that the Catholic should be the only religion of the State, and that all other forms of worship whatever should be excluded. Of course this condemnation leaves it free to the Pope to tolerate toleration where the civil power is too weak to enforce uniformity; but the proper state of things is taught to be one in which the Roman Catholic religion shall be supreme or rather sole. What kind of toleration should be allowed to native subjects of a Roman Catholic State may be guessed from the next article, which condemns the proposition that it is laudable in such a State to allow even foreign settlers the free exercise of their religion. In the accompanying Encyclical, which even Dr. Newman allows has the undoubted authority of the Pope, it is condemned as a doctrine altogether opposed to Scripture, to the Church, and to the Fathers, that violators of the Catholic religion should not be restrained by punishments except when the public peace requires. Pius IX. echoes the language of his predecessor, Gregory XVI., in stigmatizing the claim of liberty of conscience and worship as a 'deliramentum'; and as a necessary consequence similarly stigmatizing the claim of liberty of speech or liberty of the press. In art. 24 of the Syllabus the doctrine is condemned that the Church has not the power of applying coercion, or

has not direct or indirect temporal power as well as spiritual. A Jesuit commentator on this explains: 'As the Church has an external jurisdiction, she can impose temporal punishments, and not only deprive the guilty of spiritual privileges. The love of earthly things which injures the Church's order obviously cannot be effectively put down by merely spiritual punishments; it is little affected by them. If that order is to be avenged on what has injured it, if that is to suffer which has enjoyed the sin, temporal and sensible punishments must be employed.' Among these he enumerates fines, imprisonment, scourging, and banishment. He laments that in these days the true principles are not acted on as they should. We see, he says, that the State does not always fulfil its duties towards the Church according to the Divine idea, and, he adds, cannot always fulfil them through the wickedness of men. And thus the Church's right in inflicting temporal punishment and the use of physical force are reduced to a minimum.

It is plain that the Inquisition was but the legitimate carrying out of the principles here enunciated. And accordingly, soon after the publication of this document, the Pope canonized two inquisitors. If it is said that the pretensions of the Pope expressed in these articles are mediæval and inconsistent with the spirit of modern times, such an objection is met by anticipation in another article (80) which condemns the statement that the Roman Pontiff can and ought to reconcile himself with progress, with liberalism, with modern civilization: in other words, pronounces that such reconciliation is neither practicable nor desirable. Elsewhere (13) he condemns the assertion that the methods and principles by which the schoolmen cultivated theology do not agree with the necessities of our times and the progress of the sciences. In connection with this I may mention two other condemned propositions: one (11) that the Church ought not to animadvert on philosophy, but allow her to correct her own errors; the other (12), that the decrees of the Pontiffs hinder the free progress of the sciences. With respect to the relations of the ecclesiastical and civil power, those are condemned (23) who

assert that the Popes and their Councils have transgressed the limits of their power and usurped the rights of princes: in other words, the principles of Boniface VIII. and other aggressive pontiffs are frankly adopted. Again (38), those are condemned who say that the arbitrary conduct of the Popes led to the schism between the Eastern and Western Church. It is denied (25) that power not inherent in the office of the episcopate, but granted to it by the civil authority, may be withdrawn from it at the discretion of that authority; or (30) that the immunity of the Church and its ministers depends on the civil laws; or (42) that in the conflict of laws, civil and ecclesiastical, the civil law should prevail. It is denied (48) that any system of merely secular education can be approved; and (74) those are condemned who say that the law of marriages belongs to the secular, not the ecclesiastical tribunal. With regard to the Pope's temporal power, there is not only a condemnation (76) of those who say that the abolition of that power would tend to the liberty and happiness of the Church, but several allocutions are referred to in which the doctrine is set forth which all Catholics ought most firmly to hold concerning the civil power of the Roman Pontiff. You will take notice that the Pope's temporal power is thus made not a mere result of the events which have led to different portions of Europe becoming subject to different rulers, but that there is a doctrine concerning it which all Catholics ought most firmly to hold.

It would not have been possible for me, within the limits of these Lectures, to give you any complete history of the growth of Papal Supremacy. I have contented myself with sketching an account of its first beginnings, and I must allow you to study elsewhere the history of the later stages of the process by which the bishop of Rome became, in spiritual things, the master of the greater part of Europe. But having in view the internal controversies between Roman Catholics, to which I have referred, I do not think I ought to conclude this series of Lectures without saying something as to the theory of the Pope's authority in things temporal. And I

cannot discuss that subject without first speaking of the forgery of the Decretal Epistles, which did so much to lead men to believe that the Pope's power, whether in things temporal or spiritual, was subject to no limitation.

It is not more than the truth to say that the Roman claims have principally taken their growth out of two forgeries. I have already described one of them, the pseudo-Clementine literature, which first started the idea that St. Peter had been bishop of Rome. This idea was developed by successive Roman bishops, who drew from it the consequence that, as St. Peter had been chief of the Apostles, so the bishop of Rome ought to be chief of all bishops; and who by gradually increasing claims endeavoured to elevate men's notions of the authority which in that capacity he ought to exercise. But the highest claims previously made fell far short of what men were taught was the Pope's rightful possession, in the second forgery of which I have now to speak—the collection of letters purporting to have been written by early bishops of Rome, a collection first published in the ninth century.

It was a natural custom with Western bishops in early times, when cases of doubt or difficulty occurred to them in the administration of their dioceses, to ask the advice of the bishop of Rome. This is no more than what our own colonial bishops have been in the habit of doing, without thereby acknowledging in the English Church any right to command its daughter Churches. I remember one remarkable instance of the kind. Bishop Colenso, before he became noted for any doctrinal eccentricity, wrote to ask the advice of bishops at home on the delicate question how converts were to be dealt with who, at the time of their conversion, were married to more wives than one. I have already pointed out that there was exactly the same reason why Roman opinion should be respected in distant places, as there is why English opinion should be respected in the Colonies, namely, in both cases, the liberality of contributions from the central source to Church work abroad. The bishop of Rome was very rich. I dare say you know the joke with which the heathen Prætor parried the attempts of his friend, Bishop Damasus, to convert him:

'Make me bishop of Rome,' said he, 'and I will become a Christian at once.' The bishop of Rome, I have no doubt, spent his money liberally and well on Church work at home and abroad, and the opinion of a man who can confer substantial benefits will always be listened to with respect.

In the progress of Roman ambition what had at first been but the advice of a venerated superior in dignity became an order or decree. In fact, the manner in which the Roman bishops pushed their claims was, whenever one of two contending parties endeavoured to enlist the bishop of Rome on his side, to treat the applicant as having made no more than proper acknowledgment of papal authority to decide the question. He in whose favour the decision was given might be trusted not to criticize too severely the arrogance of its terms. In like manner, they who asked for advice from the bishop of Rome were complimented as dutiful subjects who had come to him for orders. The earliest genuine epistle of the kind is one by Siricius, who was Pope A.D. 384, in answer to a letter addressed to him by a Spanish bishop, asking for direction on some points of Church discipline for cases occurring in Spain. Siricius answers in a tone of authority, intermixing some reproofs; and his answers are to stand as decrees upon the several points submitted to his judgment. This letter of Siricius is the first of a collection published in the sixth century by Dionysius Exiguus, who took pains to collect all the papal epistles which were known in his time. These letters do contain proofs enough of Roman arrogance and incipient assumption; but the powers therein claimed for the Roman prelate were too small to satisfy the ambition of later times. In the ninth century another collection of papal letters, which were supposed by some means to have escaped the industry of Dionysius, was published under the name of Isidore, by whom, no doubt, a celebrated Spanish bishop of much learning was intended. In these are to be found precedents for all manner of instances of the exercise of sovereign dominion by the Pope over other Churches. You must take notice of this, that it was *by furnishing precedents* that these letters helped the growth of

papal power. Thenceforth the Popes could hardly claim any privilege, but they would find in these letters supposed proofs that the privilege in question was no more than had been always claimed by their predecessors and always exercised without any objection.

No sooner was this forgery made than it was brought into active use by Nicolas I. (Pope, 858–867), who, in the audacity of his designs, exceeded all his predecessors, pressing to the uttermost every claim which they had made, and pushing the limits of the Roman Supremacy to the point of absolute monarchy. He employed these letters in his disputes with Hincmar and the Gallic Church, and again in his controversy with the Greek patriarch, Photius, and others. The decretals, however, did not produce their full fruit for a considerable time after their production. After the death of Nicolas there came more than a century of darkness and immorality, described in the extract I formerly read from Baronius, during which the papacy fell to the lowest point of degradation. From that it emerged, at the middle of the eleventh century, by the appointment of German pontiffs—men of pure lives and of high aims. They saw the Church under complete bondage to the mighty of this world; ecclesiastical offices bought and sold without shame; vice universally prevalent, and clergy unable to rebuke it, because they were themselves deeply tainted with it. The movement of papal aggrandizement, of which the celebrated Hildebrand (afterwards Gregory VII.) was the life and soul, owed its success to the moral weight which it gained from the belief that it was an honest attempt to grapple with great abuses, and to the general satisfaction that was felt at seeing the empire of brute force confronted by a more mighty spiritual power. Pope Gregory, accepting with entire faith the decretal epistles as authentic records of the powers exercised by his predecessors, felt himself authorized to push the principles involved in them to what he regarded as their legitimate consequences. From these epistles it followed at once that the Pope was the sole source of spiritual power; without his consent no Council could be held; every bishop,

priest, or layman might appeal to him from every other judgment; the Church must be withdrawn from the control of all secular power, and be subjected to a single spiritual despot, whose errors and faults, if such there were, must be borne in silence, for from him there could be no appeal. One of the cardinals, whose assistance Gregory employed in drawing up his new system of Church law, attributes to St. Boniface the doctrine, that even if a Pope is so bad that he drags down whole nations to hell with him in troops, nobody can rebuke him, for he who judges all can be judged of no man; the only exception is in case of his swerving from the faith.

One main pillar of Gregory's system was borrowed from the false decretals. The Church of Rome, by a singular privilege, has the right of opening and shutting the kingdom of heaven to whom she will. It is plain that if the Pope has this power he can constrain to obey his will any man who values his eternal salvation; and so Gregory was able to use his power of binding and loosing in dethroning kings, and loosing subjects from their oaths of allegiance. Another doctrine Gregory got from the false decretals was, that no one dare hold speech with an excommunicated person; and as kings and emperors were not exempt from the operation of this rule, it followed that if the Pope excommunicated a king, nobody could, even in matters of business, hold communication with him; so that he was no longer fit to reign, and must be deposed. This business, however, of deposing kings is a matter on which I shall have something more to say presently. But on these spurious decretals is built the whole fabric of the Canon Law. The great schoolman, Thomas Aquinas, was taken in by them, and he was induced by them to set the example of making a chapter on the prerogatives of the Pope an essential part of treatises on the Church. Bellarmine, and a number of other Roman controversialists, were similarly misled. Yet completely successful as was this forgery, I suppose there never was a more clumsy one. These Decretal Epistles had undisputed authority for some seven hundred years, that is to say down to the time of the Reformation; yet the moment they were seriously assailed

(as they were by the Magdeburg Centuriators)*, defence was soon found to be hopeless; and there is not a single Roman Catholic divine at the present day who would venture to maintain their genuineness. In fact, the letters are full of the most outrageous anachronisms. Persons who lived centuries apart are represented as corresponding with one another. The early bishops of Rome quote the Scriptures according to Jerome's version, including the text of the three heavenly witnesses.† Some of them who lived in pagan times are made to complain of the invasion of Church property by laymen. There is a uniformity of style between letters written by Popes separated by long intervals: one egg, say the Centuriators, being not more like another than one of these epistles to another. The same phrases recur, the subjects are all of the same sort, such as the primacy of the Roman see, the allowance of appeals, &c. The style is barbarous, and full of expressions not used in early times, but common in Frankish writers of the ninth century. They say nothing of the events, the heresies, and other controversies, of their supposed date, but are full of questions which had not then arisen; and they name Church officers and Church ceremonies which had not then been introduced.

We can fix with tolerable precision the date of this forgery. The letters borrow matter from the decrees of more than one Council that was held in the first half of the ninth century: among others one that was held in 845; and they are themselves quoted in 857; so between these two dates the forgery was made; and if we say 850, we cannot be very far wrong. The place of composition was Gaul. Mentz is the city named in your text-books; but I think modern scholars are more disposed to say Rheims. Much as these letters helped Roman ambition, it was not the primary object of the forgery; but rather to secure the position of provincial

* The first great Church History on a large scale, so described because arranged according to centuries, and because the originator, Flacius Illyricus, commenced the preparation of the work at Magdeburg. The first volume appeared in 1559.

† There is an unlucky blunder at the outset. In a letter, purporting to be addressed by Clement to James, James is favoured with an extract from his own Epistle, which is ascribed to Peter.

ecclesiastics, and make it difficult to depose them. For this object it was very useful to take away from his neighbours all power of dealing with a criminous ecclesiastic, and to let the only authority that could deal with him be the distant one—Rome. A strong case of suspicion is made out against Ebbo, archbishop of Rheims, as having something to say to this forgery—at least it was calculated to serve his interests. He had taken an active part in the politics and fightings of these troubled times, and when the opposite party got the upper hand he came to be deposed. Well, it has been noticed that the most important steps taken against Ebbo, which according to the old Church law would have been quite valid, would, according to the law of these new decretals, be altogether wrong. However this may be, the main point is, that the decretals are not a Roman forgery, but a Gallic one, however much they helped the growth of Roman power. That they did help it enormously is certain; yet, now that the spuriousness of these documents is universally acknowledged, Romish advocates think that they can throw down the scaffolding, and yet that the edifice built by its means can remain. They boldly assert that these letters really taught nothing new; that they ascribed no more power to the see of Rome than it had long possessed. I think this is as impudent an assertion as has been ever made by controversialists. It would be as reasonable, supposing they had been for centuries circulating Bellarmine's chapters on the Pope as part of Holy Scripture, to say, as soon as they were found out, that it really made no difference; that, after all, Bellarmine said no more than was already taught in the text, 'Thou art Peter.'

If we want to know what share these letters had in the building of the Roman fabric we have only to look at the Canon Law. The 'Decretum'* of Gratian quotes three hundred and twenty-four times epistles of the Popes of the first four centuries, and of these three hundred and twenty-four quota-

* This work, published in 1151, was intended as a collection of everything that Gratian could find having the force of law in the Church; and it had such success that it became the standard work on the law of the Roman Church.

tions, three hundred and thirteen are from the letters which are now universally known to be spurious. I will not pledge myself to the genuineness of the remaining eleven. In writing a former Lecture I had occasion to refer to Bellarmine, to see whether he could cite any father as applying to Rome the text in which Christ prays that Peter's faith should not fail. I found he could allege no writer who was not a Pope, and the Popes he begins by citing are taken from the spurious decretals. The treatise of Bellarmine is founded on that of Melchior Canus; and of twenty quotations which he gives on this subject, eighteen are out of the false decretals. So idle is it to deny that this forgery is the foundation on which the Romish belief in papal power has been founded.

But it is said that you must grant that this is not a Roman forgery. Well, if a man presents a forged cheque, and gets money for it, it is something to say in his defence that he did not forge it himself; but if he were an honest man, as soon as he discovered the forgery he would give back what he had wrongfully acquired. Have the Popes any idea of abandoning the pretensions they were led by these documents to assert? Not the very slightest. Of course the moral guilt of the party who first utters a forged cheque depends on the question: Did he do so, knowing it to be forged? It is a true maxim, that we easily believe what is in accordance with our wishes; and it has so often happened that good Protestants have received, without the smallest sifting, untrustworthy authorities produced on the right side, that I am not in a hurry to accuse Pope Nicolas of conscious imposture. That the Pope asserted what was not true is certain. I hold it to be equally certain that he asserted what, if he had taken proper care, he might have known not to be true. Did he search the archives of his own See in order to find whether any trace of these letters of his predecessors was to be found there? On the contrary, when the genuineness of the alleged letters is questioned on account of their not being to be found in previous collections, he puts down all these doubts with a high hand, accusing these former collections of incompleteness.

Some of Dr. Littledale's critics lift up their hands in holy horror at the idea of a saint like Nicolas being accused of wilful forgery. What the character of this individual was is a matter with which we have no concern; we are concerned, not with the man, but with the Pope. Now, when you catch a man presenting a forged cheque, it is all very well to say he could not possibly have known it to be forged, he is such a very respectable clergyman. But if you find that this very respectable clergyman makes a constant trade of presenting forged cheques, and living on the proceeds, our judgment can hardly be quite so charitable. Now there never was a case so gangrened with forgery as that for the papal claims; that which we have been discussing is the most stupendous; but it had been preceded by a constant succession of forgeries, of which there can be no doubt that Rome was the birthplace. I told you already of the attempt to pass off the Sardican canons as Nicene. At the Council of Chalcedon the Roman legates were detected in presenting the sixth canon of Nicæa with a forged preface, that 'the Roman Church always had had the primacy.' The string of subsequent Roman forgeries is so long that it would tire your patience to go through it. One of them is mentioned in Burnet: 'The Fable of P. Marcellin.' It was invented to establish the principle that the Pope was inviolable, and could not be tried by any human tribunal: the story being that Pope Marcellinus had sacrificed to idols, and that a Synod of 284 bishops being assembled at Sinuessa, they had not the hardihood to presume to try the Pope, but asked him to pass sentence on himself, which he accordingly did, by confession and self-condemnation. Then comes a series of forgeries falsifying the history of the great Council of Nicæa. Constantine was made out to have been baptized at Rome; the Council of Nicæa was summoned by the Pope's authority; a letter was forged from the Council, asking the Pope to confirm its decrees, which he accordingly does at a Council held at Rome. Then there comes the 'Liber Pontificalis,' in which the scanty record of the bishops of Rome is enriched with fictitious stories of the doings of their pontificates, these fictitious stories being largely made use of

in the forged decretals. It would be too long to tell how Cyprian, who in his lifetime had been an opponent of papal ambition, and whose works had, consequently, been rejected by Pope Gelasius, was thought too great a man to be allowed to remain permanently on the wrong side, and was therefore converted to Roman orthodoxy by means of a judicious interpolation into his works. I suppose you have heard of the famous Donation of Constantine. The older fiction of his cure from leprosy and baptism by Sylvester was improved by a narrative, that the emperor, out of gratitude, bestowed Italy and the western provinces on the Pope; this forgery having been made in order to induce king Pepin to secure these territories to the Pope, who, under the cover of this forgery could ask them, not as a gift, but as a restitution. The success of this forgery induced others to swell the temporal power of the Pontiffs. Never have men incurred the woe—'Woe unto him that buildeth his house by unrighteousness, and his chambers by wrong'—more than the Popes have done, both in respect of their temporal and their spiritual power. It is impossible to think that if Roman prerogatives had rested on any Divine gift, it would have been necessary to bolster up the fabric with so enormous a congeries of fraud and lies.

Roman pretensions reached their height when the Pope claimed to be the supreme ruler of Christendom, administering directly such territories as he was pleased to keep under his immediate control, and with power to depose any sovereign over the remaining parts who might be disobedient to his will. It is well to let you know what a plausible defence is made at the present day for even this extreme power of the Pope. The Popes are represented in teaching the maligned doctrine of their deposing power, to have been but the champions of what are now recognized as the just rights of subjects. There was, indeed, a time when this doctrine of the deposing power could not have been harmonized with what was taught in the pulpits of the Church of England. After the Restoration, the evils which had been keenly felt as attending the disturbance of an established Government

were still fresh in men's memory, and were in their estimation incomparably worse than the half-forgotten evils which it had been hoped by rebellion to redress. So experience seemed to them to justify the doctrine of the absolute unlawfulness of resistance to the Civil rulers. The question of defining the limits of the power, prerogatives, or jurisdiction of sovereign princes was then easily settled; for it was held that there were no limits, or rather that, if there were, the transgression of them was an offence which it must be left to God to detect and to punish. Subjects must not presume to make themselves judges of their superiors; for if it were lawful for them to be judges in their own cause against the prince, then no one who had a mind to rebel need be at a loss for a lawful cause. It was recalled to mind that when St. Paul wrote the words: 'Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers,' the sovereign whom he instructed his disciples to obey was Nero; whence it was inferred that the best of saints were bound to be in subjection to the worst of men, if he were their lawful ruler. No impieties or faults in the man could invalidate his office. Though Nero deserve worthily to be abhorred, yet still the emperor is, and ought to be, sacred. A man cannot be so wicked, but that he is still a man by God's creation; a magistrate cannot be so vile and unjust, but that he is still an officer by God's institution. He holds his government by deputation from God, as God's officer; and to rebel against him were the violation of government, which is the very soul and support of the universe, and the imitation of God's providence.

This doctrine is what we should pronounce servile; but when it was delivered it had, at least, the recommendation that it certainly was not Popish. South, in a sermon,* some points of which I have here reproduced, casts odium with great dexterity on the doctrine of the lawfulness of resistance to princes, as taught by the Puritans of his time, by showing its identity with what had been taught by the Popes and the

* On Rom. xiii. 1. In verifying this quotation, I find in the second sermon on Isaiah, v. 20, a curious opinion, which I forbear to quote, as to the value of the distinction whether or not the Pope speaks *ex cathedra*.

Jesuits, from which he argued that the sons of Geneva and the sons of Rome were as truly brothers as were Romulus and Remus, both having sucked their principles from the same wolf.

If this identification was then used to the damage of the Puritans, it has been so used in our time to the benefit of the Romanists. Their doctrine concerning the Pope's power to depose temporal princes, and to release their subjects from the obligation of oaths which had been taken to them, had been treated by Protestant divines as so clearly indefensible, that it was supposed only necessary to show that it had been taught with authority in the Roman Church, when it would follow at once that that Church was not infallible. *Now* it is contended that the Popes, in teaching this maligned doctrine, were only the champions of what are recognized as the just rights of subjects, their defenders against the tyranny of royal oppressors.

In ages when brute force was everywhere supreme, and when despots held sway, many of whom were wicked enough to be capable of rivalling the enormities of the worst of the Roman emperors, was it not the safety of the world that the Church could not be silenced? When others crouched in fear and choked down their grief and indignation, one old man, feeble in this world's strength, but strong in the authority of Him in whose name he spoke, had courage to tell the evildoer how his actions were judged of in the sight of God, and could successfully threaten him, if he did not reform, with the loss of the power which he misused. 'It is amusing,' exclaim the Romish advocates, 'that Protestants should affect to be shocked at the claim of the Popes to release subjects from their oaths of allegiance to unworthy sovereigns. One would be tempted to think that Protestants themselves believed these oaths to be chains which no human power could undo, and which in no change of circumstances cease to be binding. Why, just the reverse is the case. The deed of those who rose in arms against their king, and sent him to public execution, finds now many an approver and defender; and those

who condemn it absolutely repudiate the slavish principles of the divines of the Restoration. If concerning this there be difference of opinion, Protestants, at least, are nearly unanimous in counting it a glorious revolution when another king was driven from his throne in violation of the most solemn of oaths. The large majority of the clergy of those days, loud as they had been shortly before in condemning the rebellious doctrines of the Puritans, when they had tasted a little of oppression themselves, scrupled not to treat their old oaths of allegiance as no longer binding, and to take new ones to monarchs of their own choosing. These principles have spread over Europe. In the year 1848 there was scarcely a throne whose occupant was not dispossessed. We do not pretend to be in the least shocked at any of these changes of government; yet is it satisfactory that people should make themselves judge and jury in their own cause, and depose their sovereign when they please? What is an oath worth if he who takes it regards it as binding only so long as he himself may choose to observe it? Were it not infinitely better that there should be a recognized arbiter over all, who should hear all complaints of misgovernment, and decide whether it had reached such a point as would justify resistance and warrant subjects in withholding their sworn allegiance?' Such an arbiter, it is said, was the Pope in the middle ages, by the common consent of European nations. However little a prince might relish the Pope's interference with himself, he seldom objected to his interference with his neighbour; and often the king whose deposition by the Pope is now said to have been an act of tyrannical usurpation, had been himself ready to profit by the Pope's gift to him of another sovereign's dominions. This shows that the Pope's authority was then recognized as legitimate. But, in particular, it was then part of the common law of Christendom that he who ruled over a Christian nation must himself be a Christian: neither a heathen nor a heretic. And the Pope was evidently discharging an office which specially belonged to him if he declared whether or not a sovereign had fallen into heresy, and whether or not he had accordingly incurred the forfeiture

of his crown. Thus, then, we who admit that cases may occur when subjects may lawfully depose their sovereigns, and treat the oaths they have taken to them as no longer binding, are called on to admit also that it would be an advantage that there should be an authority competent to decide whether in any case withdrawal of allegiance would be justified. And so we are told that we ought to be ashamed of the outcry we have raised against the exercise of the deposing power by the mediæval Popes, such an outcry not being justifiable unless we adopt the Caroline doctrines of passive obedience and non-resistance; the exercise of the deposing power having been perfectly legitimate according to the political constitution of Europe at the time, and that constitution which gave a common head to all Christian nations, being really preferable to the international anarchy of the present time.

Such is the defence made for the extravagant pretensions in secular matters of the Popes of the middle ages. I postpone for a time the consideration of the two questions whether, in point of fact, the European nations did really concede the supremacy over temporal princes which the Popes claimed to exercise; and whether it would have been advantageous to them to have conceded it; because it is necessary first to point out that Roman apologists mislead us if they would have us believe that it was on any such voluntary concession that the Pope rested his claims. He did not claim the right because nations had given it to him; but nations often yielded it to him because they believed his assertion that God had given it to him. The consent of peoples would, of course, affect the prudence of exercising the right, but not the right itself. The late Pope might believe that he had the power to depose the emperor of Germany or of Russia, but he knew that if he did so he would only ruin his own adherents in these countries if they obeyed his deposition of their sovereign. In this way the consent of peoples is necessary to the prudent exercise of the deposing power; but the Popes never admitted that it was the consent of peoples which gave them their power. It is in this sense that we are to understand language

used by Pio Nono, in which he spoke of the 'right' of deposing sovereigns, as exercised by his predecessors, and stated that their authority in accordance with public right which was then vigorous, and with the acquiescence of all Christian nations, extended so far as to pass judgment even in civil affairs on the acts of princes and nations. That we are here to understand the acquiescence of Christian nations not as giving the right, but as constituting that happy state of things which made its exercise possible and prudent, is evident from the language used by his predecessors.

Take the first great case of the deposition of a prince—that of the emperor Henry, by Gregory VII. It was not the consent of peoples to which Gregory appealed, but to the blessed Peter, whom he addressed in these words:—'Since it hath pleased thee that the people of Christ, specially entrusted to thee, should obey me in thy stead; since by thy grace power is given to me to bind and loose in heaven and in earth, therefore relying on this trust for the honour and defence of thy Church, and in behalf of Almighty God, I deny to Henry the government of the whole nation of Germany and Italy, and I release all Christians from the bond of the oath which they have made to him, and I forbid anyone to serve him as if he were a king.' These principles were acted on and improved by Gregory's successors. Innocent III. applied to himself the words of God spoken to Jeremiah, and declared that God had ordained the Pope, as Christ's vicar, 'to have power over all nations and kingdoms, to root out, and to pull down, to destroy, to build, and to plant.' It was this Pope who found the papal power in the first chapter of Genesis; that power being the sun which God hath appointed to rule the day, that is, in spiritual things; while the imperial power was but that lesser light which He had appointed to rule in the night, that is in carnal things. It would be too long to tell how commentators worked out this analogy, as, for instance, that the spiritual power shines by its own light; the temporal derives its authority from the spiritual, which commands subjects to be obedient for conscience' sake. Nay, it was supposed possible to determine thus the exact proportion between the two

powers, though unhappily the theologians, who invoked the aid of the unfamiliar sciences of astronomy and arithmetic, went so far astray in their calculations as to do gross injustice to the papal claims. The gloss on this decretal of Innocent computes that as the earth is seven times greater than the moon, and the sun eight times greater than the earth, so it follows (I do not exactly see how) that the papal dignity is forty-seven times greater than the Imperial.* Later Popes still further developed the theories of Gregory and Innocent. Boniface VIII., for instance, in the preamble of a Bull, giving away the Island of Sardinia, commences, 'Being set above kings and princes by a divine pre-eminence of power, we dispose of them as we think fit.' But the fullest statement of his doctrine concerning his supremacy is in his celebrated Bull 'Unam Sanctam.' In this he lays down that there is but one Catholic Church, and of that Church but one head, namely Christ, and Christ's vicar, Peter, and his successor. In Peter's power are two swords, the spiritual and the temporal, each of which is therefore in the power of the Church. [I may say, in passing, that one of the most used texts in this controversy was that which relates Peter's words on the night of our Lord's betrayal, 'here are two swords,' on which it was remarked that our Lord's reply was not 'that is too much,' but 'it is enough.'] One of these swords must be subject to the other: the temporal to the spiritual. If, therefore, the earthly power err, the spiritual will judge it; but if the spiritual err, God only can set it right. This authority, not human, but divine, was given by the divine lips to Peter, and confirmed to him and his successors. 'Therefore whoso resists this power resists the ordinance of God, unless, like a Manichæan, he pretends that there are two first principles, which we declare to be heretical and false. Moreover, we declare, affirm, define, and pronounce that it is absolutely necessary to salvation that every human creature should be subject to the Roman Pontiff.'

Enough has been quoted to show what a misrepresentation it is when Roman apologists wish to produce an impression that the mediæval Popes exercised a dominion lawful because

* Decret. Greg., lib. i., tit. 33, c. 6.

granted to them by the public consent of the time. It was not on this consent that the Popes themselves based it. The consent, indeed, was by no means, at any time, universal. Naturally, when the Pope made a present of one man's territory to another, he who received the gift and he at whose expense it was made were apt to hold different opinions as to the Pope's power to confer it. But if the consent were ever so general, it was given only because belief was given to the Pope's assertion that a man would forfeit his eternal salvation by denying his claim. If that claim were really unfounded, no subsequent consent could legalize it. As well might a man who presents a forged cheque at a banker's maintain that he has a just claim to the money he receives because the banker's clerks have freely and voluntarily handed it over to him. They did so under a false apprehension, supposing the claimant to be vested with an authority which he did not possess. In like manner, when the Popes came before the nations of Europe with forged documents in their hands, asking them on this evidence to own that Christ's vicar had the right to apportion their territories as he pleased, the fact that the claim was admitted does not legalize it, because it was fraudulent in its inception.

Far be it from me to disguise the fact that the Pope's claim was admitted. It is this fact which makes the doctrine of the deposing power so great a stumbling-block in the way not only of the theory of the personal infallibility of the Popes but of every theory of infallibility whatsoever. Take the theory most opposed to the Ultramontane, the Gallican, and I say that the theory that the Pope possesses by divine right the power of deposing kings, satisfies all the Gallican tests whether a doctrine is infallibly true. It was solemnly propounded by the Pope as 'de fide,' and acquiesced in generally by the Western Christian world. Particular exercises of the power were objected to by the parties whom they affected, as transgressing the just limits of the power; but the general existence of the power was not denied. If, therefore, we now do not admit that Christ gave the Popes that power in temporal things which they claim, it follows inevitably that what

Romanists count the Catholic Church may err; for, setting aside the Eastern nations which they do not include in it, all the West agreed in accepting the Pope's account of his power as true. It will be found, then, that the consistent maintainers of Papal Infallibility at the present day are forced to hold the doctrine of his temporal power; and they really do hold it, however they may try to make it palatable to modern ears by speaking of the consent of peoples to admit it.

But, in truth, this doctrine of the Pope's temporal power has not merely the accidental connexion with the doctrine of infallibility that it happened to be affirmed by the infallible authority. It is the necessary outcome of the theory that God has given to His people on earth a guide able infallibly to resolve all their doubts and guarantee them against error. Bellarmine's book on Controversies was for a time placed on the index, because in the then Pope's judgment he had placed on too low grounds his defence of the Pope's temporal power. But any reasonable Pope might have been well satisfied with the proof Bellarmine gives that a power in temporal things results, when once it is acknowledged that the Pope is an infallible guide both in faith and morals. Is it possible to think that it is only speculative error from which that guide can free men? Would he be able to give no help to men whose consciences were perplexed; and, when they were hesitating between two courses, one of which could not be followed without sin, would he be unable to point out the right one? In particular in the case which has come before us—of subjects who had grave reason to complain of their rulers, but doubted whether or not the misgovernment had been such that in withdrawing their allegiance they would be guilty of neither perjury nor rebellion, and feared to trust their own judgment in so weighty a matter, to whom should they turn for guidance but to him whom they believed to have been appointed by Christ as guide and ruler of His Church on earth; and, if he really possessed the attributes he claimed, was it possible that he could guide inquirers wrong?

O'Connell said that he would take his theology from

Rome, but not his politics. This saying betrays ignorance of the Roman Catholic doctrine that the Pope is an infallible guide not only in matters of faith (or, in other words, on questions of speculative theology), but also in morals. It cannot be denied that many political questions involve questions of morals. Bellarmine rightly pointed out that, even though Christ conferred no direct temporal power on the Pope, yet, from the spiritual power which He did confer, and chiefly from the power infallibly to declare what are sins and what are duties, follows indirectly, indeed, but inevitably, temporal power of the highest kind. For he who is able to speak in God's name, and to declare with authority what God has commanded or forbidden, is really in a position to utter commands which supersede the commands of any human authority.

Thus, in a merely temporal matter which only concerns the affairs of this world, Bellarmine holds that the Pope has no right to interfere with the duly constituted authorities; but in anything that concerns the safety of souls he *has* a right —and remember it is for the Pope to decide whether a thing concerns the safety of souls or not. In such a case he may abrogate a civil law injurious to men's souls, which the civil power refuses to annul; or he may make a law which the civil power neglects to enact; or he may deprive a prince of his power altogether: provided always thaf he sees that the good of men's souls so requires. In particular, though the early Christians submitted to the rule of a Nero or a Diocletian, it was for want of power to resist successfully that they so submitted; but now that they have strength to shake off such a yoke, the Pope would gravely neglect his duty if he left their souls exposed to the serious peril in which they would be involved if they were ruled over by an infidel or heretical sovereign. When Christ commanded Peter to feed His flock, He conferred on him the powers necessary to the fit discharge of that office, and amongst these powers are the power to keep off wolves—that is, to shield the flock from heretics—and the power to keep in

order and restrain unruly rams, who butt and injure the peaceable sheep—that is to say, to restrain sovereigns who, though Catholics, may use their power to the injury of the souls of their subjects.

The connexion that has been established between the doctrine of the Pope's Infallibility and that of his power in temporal things, has the advantage of bringing the doctrine of Infallibility to an experimental test. The Pope may, with little fear of contradiction, dispose of the kingdoms of the unseen world. He may inspire his adherents with the confidence in which one of them* boasts that an indulgence which he destines for a soul in purgatory reaches its destination as surely as a letter which he puts into the post-office; and the pretension can neither be tested nor experimentally refuted. But when his infallibility comes within the sphere of this world's concerns we are better able to see what it is worth. And the test is not an unfair one, for it might seem as if it could not fail to turn out to the advantage of the claim. Can anything seem more desirable than that there should be a supreme court, which should make all war, whether civil or foreign, impossible, by its power of arbitrating all disputes whether between one sovereign and another or between any sovereign and his subjects? No wonder that the nations of Europe gladly embraced the idea, when they saw the hope of obtaining such a guardian of the public peace. But, alas! the old difficulty arose—Who was to guard the guardian? He proved altogether unworthy of his trust. His decisions were made, not in the interests of peace and justice, but of his own selfish ends. It is proof enough of this that he has lost his power; for the tribunal which he occupied, if rightly filled, would have conferred such temporal advantages on the world that, when it was also backed by the highest religious sanction, it needed not that it should have been guided by infallible wisdom. Had it been governed by common fairness and honesty, Europe would never have parted with it. But then took place exactly the practical refutation that was experienced by the Caroline doctrine of non-resistance. Anglican

* Father Faber.

divines held that under no circumstances was it lawful to resist the civil ruler. If he misgoverned, God alone could judge him. They made practical trial of their theory, and soon were glad to abandon it. So, in like manner, the Romish divines owned the danger of making the civil ruler irresponsible. They instituted a power above him, to which he must give account; but they held that if that power went astray none but God could set it right. And here, too, those who had accepted the theory were forced to abandon it by discovering that there is no exception to the rule, that irresponsible power is apt to lead before long to absolutely intolerable abuse.

In deciding, for instance, between prince and subjects, a ruler most hateful to his subjects was upheld, if subservient to the Pope, and one most acceptable to them deposed, if not submissive to Papal will. It is enough to mention our own experience. The degrading submission of King John to the Pope gained him the Pope's hearty support in his contests with his subjects, and the great Charter was obtained not merely from a reluctant king, but in defiance of Papal excommunications. On the contrary, a sovereign so acceptable to her subjects as Queen Elizabeth was excommunicated and deposed by two successive Pontiffs—a futile act, by which they injured their own religion more than anything else. Even Roman Catholic states disregarded the excommunication; and treaties, alliances, business, commerce, went on as before. Meanwhile, the fanatical believers in the Pope's power, who were driven by his instigations into rebellion, suffered death, and yet did not gain for their religion the moral victory which was won for ours by the constancy of our martyrs in the Marian persecutions, because those men were understood by all to have suffered death, not as heretics but as rebels and traitors.

The case of King John, to which I have referred, was made the subject of a special apology by Cardinal Manning. His defence is in substance this:—The excommunication is not to be understood as implying the Pope's disapproval of the provisions of the great Charter. Many of these related

to the correction of local abuses, which the Pope, by reason of distance, was quite incapable of understanding. But it was the means which the barons took to obtain the Charter which put them clearly in the wrong. In the early stages of the conflict, when the tyrant king was trampling impartially on civil liberties and ecclesiastical rights, the Pope and the barons were united in resistance, and the latter were consequently in the right. But when their ally, having obtained his own objects, had made a separate peace, they had no business to carry on the fight any longer. If the king did not redress their wrongs they might appeal to the Pope, and be content with whatever satisfaction he might be pleased to give them; notwithstanding that, as Manning himself has reminded us, the Pope's want of local information made him an incompetent judge of the matters in dispute. I have no doubt that Manning's theory of the duty of subjects coincides with that of Innocent III. But, as even in John's time it was rejected as an innovation, and the English declared that the ordering of secular matters belongeth not to a Pope, so it is not likely that the doctrines will find favour now which we rejoice were not accepted by our fathers.

I have said that the Popes abused their power by exercising it, not in the interests of the peoples whom they claimed to govern, but in their own; and I must add, not in the interests of anything that can plausibly claim the high name of religion, but of the most vulgar ambition. For the Popes were not content with the lofty position of being supreme judges over temporal princes: they wanted to be temporal princes themselves; and when they sought to aggrandize their dominions they freely used the spiritual weapon of excommunication.

You know that they were successful in this endeavour; so much so, that if it were mentioned that I was lecturing 'on the temporal power of the Popes,' it would be popularly imagined that I was discussing the right of the Popes to rule over a certain portion of Italy. I think, therefore, that I must not wholly omit to say something about this claim; but you will observe that it is a different thing from what I have

been really discussing, viz. the Pope's right to interfere in temporal matters in any part of the world. The latter right, if it exist at all, is an inalienable possession of the See, and must have belonged to it from the first, being inseparably connected with the Pope's office as head of the Church and infallible guide to Christians on questions of faith and morals. The former right only belongs to the See accidentally. It was some centuries before it possessed it, and the Pope might cease to be a temporal sovereign without any loss of his spiritual powers.

In my private opinion his spiritual power would then be all the greater, and therefore I never thought it matter for controversial triumph that the Pope, in 1870, ceased to be an Italian prince. I do not believe the assertion that temporal sovereignty is necessary for the free exercise of his spiritual power; for I believe that in the present state of public opinion the Pope would be quite as free to excommunicate any person whom he thought unfit to be a member of his Church, if he lived in London or New York, as if he lived in Rome. Nay, I count that his direction of spiritual matters was far more liable to be influenced by extraneous considerations when he was dependent on foreign powers for his possession of a precarious throne than since he has had nothing to hope for from the good-will of secular princes. However, I will not dispute that the Pope may be a better judge than I as to what the interests of his religion require; and I must acknowledge that Pius IX. held it to be essential to those interests that he should be king as well as Pope. It was judged that at the bottom of his claim to infallibility was anxiety on his part that his word should be taken on this subject; and it was believed that if the Vatican Council had been prolonged it would have been asked to ratify his opinion. A list of doctrines—with respect to which Cardinal Manning says that the Church cannot be silent, cannot hold her peace—begins with the Trinity and Incarnation, and ends with the necessity of the temporal sovereignty of the Holy See. Still I cannot but think it likely that future Roman Catholic divines will count it as a providential escape that their Church has not

irrevocably committed herself to a claim likely to bring her less honour than disgrace.

I know no part of Church History less calculated to impress a truly religious man with respect for the Papacy than the history of those Popes who did most to gain its Italian States for the Church. There have been worse Popes: indeed, their immediate predecessors were worse who, instead of working for the benefit of the See, aimed only at gaining principalities for their sons and their nephews. But all alike seem to have their whole thoughts bent on things of earth, and to be men from whom no one would dream of coming to obtain spiritual counsel.

I have already said something as to frauds used in order to gain that power, beginning with the famous forgery of the donation of Constantine, by which the Frankish monarchs were induced to believe that the Italian provinces rightfully belonged, not to the Greek emperors, but to the Roman Pontiffs; and this forgery was succeeded by others with similar objects. But many a power has proved a benefit to the world, the first origin of which will not bear investigation. I should not care, therefore, to mention the frauds by which the papal power was built up, if a more sacred origin had not been claimed for it; but the best justification of the power would have been in the use that was made of it. Surely we should say that the happiest of men must be that chosen people who were so fortunate as to be under the direct rule of him whose office it was to punish all instances of misgovernment in others, of him who was appointed to feed Christ's sheep, who was the divinely constituted guardian of truth and justice in the world. His dominions, we should expect, would rapidly increase by the voluntary cession of peoples, anxious to place themselves under his beneficent rule.

Godliness has promise of the life that now is as well as of that which is to come. Surely he whose infallible wisdom prescribes such laws as best secure men's eternal happiness might be expected to rule in such a way as most to promote the happiness of his subjects in this life. If there be any force

in the *a priori* arguments which have made men believe that God will be sure to fulfil all their expectations as to His government of this world, and in particular that He will supply an unerring guide, able to resolve correctly every theological problem about which the members of His Church may dispute, surely we might argue that God would not bring discredit on His gift by refusing to His appointed minister in things spiritual, at least, some share of the human wisdom with which things temporal are managed; and that He would not put such a strain on men's faith as to require them to believe that the same man who was seen to be thoroughly unwise and incompetent in every matter on which we can form a judgment of our own, might be trusted to make decisions, guided by infallible wisdom, in those matters on which we are told we are not competent to form any judgment at all.

It is not possible to state what papal Government might reasonably have been expected to be without seeming to be cruelly ironical. For it is notorious that what, if the Romanist theory of its origin were true, ought to be the best government in the world, in fact turned out to be the very worst. At the time of the accession of Pius IX. it was fondly hoped that he would distinguish himself as a reformer of previous maladministration; and in this hope Mr. Mahony, better known as Father Prout, who was then at Rome, wrote the following description of the condition of the Papal States at the time of that accession:—'Confessedly things had gone on during Gregory's sixteen years of reign from bad to worse, from feebleness to dotage. The finances were in an awful state; the trade and commerce of the country depressed, paralysed, and in despair; the cultivation of science in every department clogged and discountenanced; no hope, no buoyancy, in any of the liberal professions; deep-rooted discontent among the people; open rebellion in the legations; corruption in every branch of the civil and in some departments of ecclesiastical administration; dogged reluctance to adopt any system of amelioration; stupid adherence to worn-out expedients and bygone

traditions of redtapery; the approach of ruin looked at with the calm stolidity of an idiot who hugs himself to the last in the cherished monotony of routine and fatalism. All was desolate, waste, barren, and dilapidated, beyond the graphic picture of the inspired writer who has left on solemn record his landscape of the field of the sluggard, with its fences broken down and other evidences of sad improvidence: "I went by the field of the slothful and by the vineyard of the man void of understanding, and lo! it was all grown over with thorns; and nettles had covered the face of it, and the stone wall thereof was broken down. Then I saw and considered it well; I looked and received instruction; yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep; so shall thy poverty come as one that travelleth, and thy want as an armed man."' I cannot quote at greater length Mahony's picture of oppressive taxes; great waste in the collection; discouragement of arts and industry; discontent of the educated classes, there being no place for any layman in the employment of the Government; sullen dissatisfaction with the overpowering predominance of Austrian power, whose bayonets secured the continuance of the existing state of things, and scared away all hope of reform. This picture, you will observe, was not drawn by an enemy anxious to discredit the Pope's government generally, but by one who hoped that the prosperity to be introduced by Pius IX. would contrast brightly with past mismanagement. I need not say how these hopes were disappointed: how Pius, after figuring for a year or two in the character of a liberal Pope, became frightened at the prospect that opened out to him: how it became more and more difficult to induce his subjects to submit to his rule: how he maintained a precarious seat on his throne as long as he was propped up by foreign bayonets, and fell from it the moment they were withdrawn.

Manning is not likely to make many converts in England to his doctrine, that the miserable right of a few priests to misgovern some thousands of Italians is necessary to the perfection of Christ's kingdom upon earth. But if he is right in holding that this doctrine is a legitimate deduction

from his theory of Infallibility, the falsity of the conclusion serves to prove that there is falsity in the premisses. If it is incredible that Christ should leave His people exposed to the risk of error in matters of speculation, it is incredible also that He would leave them exposed to the risk of going wrong in practical matters. If there is an infallible guide to tell us how to believe, that guide ought to be able to tell us also how we are to act. It is impossible to make a separation between faith and morals. Ultramontanes are only consistent in saying that he who governs the one must also have dominion over the other. But he whom we recognize as able to give us unerring guidance in practical matters is, in truth, the ruler of Life. His advice avails more with us than the commands of any person whatever. If there be, then, any such infallible guide upon earth, every secular power which does not itself submit to it and frame its laws according to its dictates, must rightly regard it as an enemy. For if the infallible authority does its duty it must scrutinize every ordinance of the secular power in order to ascertain whether that law directly or indirectly affects the welfare of the souls of the people. But there are few questions with which legislators deal which do not come under this description. For instance, this authority has claimed—and, on its own principles, rightly claimed—to pronounce upon toleration, civil liberty, education, marriage: nay, it clearly would not travel out of its province if it pronounced on the lawfulness of any foreign war, nor if it directed subjects to vindicate their rights by rebellion. It is argued, then, that if Christ did not see fit to complete His scheme by giving His vicar upon earth temporal power as well as spiritual, that vicar would be left exposed to suffer from temporal governments such measures of expulsion or repression as the rulers of any country deal to those who will not submit to the law of the land.

But the Popes have had the opportunity of working out their theory of a necessity of temporal power, and have brought it to miserable failure. Not only did they destroy the temporal prosperity of the states they governed, but they

impaired their own spiritual influence through the hatred inspired by the character of their rule. The Pope might drive through any part of heretic London, and be sure of a courteous reception: but the last two Popes have thought it necessary to shut themselves up in their own palace, through alleged fear, if they stirred out of it, of meeting insults from their countrymen who ought to know them best. Now, men who have themselves made such a poor hand at governing are clearly not fit to teach others how to govern; and therefore we may safely reject the Pope's claim to interfere with secular princes in their government of their states. And this claim is, as we have seen, inseparably connected with the Pope's general claim to Infallibility, so that we arrive once more at the result that we have no right to think that Christ has provided us with any infallible security for right thinking or right doing, or taught us any other way for attaining these ends than the prayerful use of the means He has given us for the education of our own reason and conscience.

APPENDIX.

DECREES OF THE VATICAN COUNCIL.

I. CONSTITUTIO DOGMATICA DE FIDE CATHOLICA.

II. CANONES.

III. CONSTITUTIO DOGMATICA PRIMA DE ECCLESIA CHRISTI.

IV. SUSPENSIO CONCILII.

APPENDIX.

DECREES OF THE VATICAN COUNCIL.

The Decrees of the Vatican Council being not so easily accessible to students as older authoritative documents of the Roman Church, I subjoin here the chapters of the 'Constitutio dogmatica de Fide Catholica,' passed at the Third Session, April 24th, 1870, and the 'Constitutio dogmatica prima de Ecclesia Christi,' passed at the Fourth Session, July 18th, 1870. The reason why there was not a 'Constitutio secunda' appears from the subjoined extract from the Apostolic Letter suspending the Council. Only formal business was done at the first two Sessions of the Council.

CONSTITUTIO DOGMATICA DE FIDE CATHOLICA.

CAPUT I.

De Deo rerum omnium Creatore.

Sancta Catholica Apostolica Romana Ecclesia credit et confitetur, unum esse Deum verum et vivum, Creatorem ac Dominum coeli et terrae, omnipotentem, aeternum, immensum, incomprehensibilem, intellectu ac voluntate omnique perfectione infinitum; qui cum sit una singularis, simplex omnino et incommutabilis substantia spiritualis, praedicandus est re et essentia a mundo distinctus, in se et ex se beatissimus, et super omnia, quae praeter ipsum sunt et concipi possunt, ineffabiliter excelsus.

Hic solus verus Deus bonitate sua et omnipotenti virtute, non ad augendam suam beatitudinem, nec ad acquirendam, sed ad manifestandam perfectionem suam per bona quae creaturis impertitur, liberrimo consilio

simul ab initio temporis utramque de nihilo condidit creaturam, spiritualem et corporalem, angelicam videlicet et mundanam, ac deinde humanam quasi communem ex spiritu et corpore constitutam.*

Universa vero, quae condidit, Deus providentia sua tuetur atque gubernat, attingens a fine usque ad finem fortiter, et disponens omnia suaviter.† Omnia enim nuda et aperta sunt oculis ejus,‡ ea etiam, quae libera creaturarum actione futura sunt.

CAPUT II.

De Revelatione.

Eadem Sancta Mater Ecclesia tenet et docet, Deum, rerum omnium principium et finem, naturali humanae rationis lumine e rebus creatis certo cognosci posse; invisibilia enim ipsius, a creatura mundi, per ea quae facta sunt intellecta, conspiciuntur:§ attamen placuisse ejus sapientiae et bonitati, alia, eaque supernaturali via, se ipsum ac aeterna voluntatis suae decreta humano generi revelare, dicente Apostolo: Multifariam, multisque modis olim Deus loquens patribus in Prophetis, novissime, diebus istis locutus est nobis in Filio.‖

Huic divinae revelationi tribuendum quidem est, ut ea, quae in rebus divinis humanae rationi per se impervia non sunt, in praesenti quoque generis humani conditione ab omnibus expedite, firma certitudine et nullo admixto errore cognosci possint. Non hac tamen de causa revelatio absolute necessaria dicenda est, sed quia Deus ex infinita bonitate sua ordinavit hominem ad finem supernaturalem, ad participanda scilicet bona divina, quae humanae mentis intelligentiam omnino superant; siquidem oculus non vidit, nec auris audivit, nec in cor hominis ascendit, quae praeparavit Deus iis, qui diligunt illum.¶

Haec porro supernaturalis revelatio, secundum universalis Ecclesiae fidem, a sancta Tridentina Synodo declaratam, continetur in libris scriptis et sine scripto traditionibus, quae ipsius Christi ore ab Apostolis acceptae, aut ab ipsis Apostolis Spiritu Sancto dictante quasi per manus traditae, ad nos usque pervenerunt.** Qui quidem veteris et novi Testamenti libri integri cum omnibus suis partibus, prout in ejusdem Concilii decreto recensentur, et in veteri vulgata latina editione habentur, pro sacris et canonicis suscipiendi sunt. Eos vero Ecclesia pro sacris et canonicis habet, non ideo, quod sola humana industria concinnati, sua deinde auctoritate sint approbati; nec ideo dumtaxat, quod revelationem sine errore contineant; sed propterea, quod Spiritu Sancto inspirante conscripti Deum habent auctorem, atque ut tales ipsi Ecclesiae traditi sunt.

* Conc. Later. iv. c. 1. *Firmiter.* † Sap. viii. 1. ‡ *Cf.* Hebr. iv. 13.
§ Rom. i. 20. ‖ Hebr. i. 1–2. ¶ 1 Cor. ii. 9.
** Conc. Trid. Sess. iv. Decr. de Can. Script.

Quoniam vero, quae sancta Tridentina Synodus de interpretatione divinae Scripturae ad coërcenda petulantia ingenia salubriter decrevit, a quibusdam hominibus prave exponuntur, Nos, idem decretum renovantes, hanc illius mentem esse declaramus, ut in rebus fidei et morum, ad aedificationem doctrinae Christianae pertinentium, is pro vero sensu sacrae Scripturae habendus sit, quem tenuit ac tenet Sancta Mater Ecclesia, cujus est judicare de vero sensu et interpretatione Scripturarum sanctarum; atque ideo nemini licere contra hunc sensum, aut etiam contra unanimem consensum Patrum ipsam Scripturam sacram interpretari.

CAPUT III.

De Fide.

Quum homo a Deo tanquam Creatore et Domino suo totus dependeat, et ratio creata increatae Veritati penitus subjecta sit, plenum revelanti Deo intellectus et voluntatis obsequium fide praestare tenemur. Hanc vero fidem, quae humanae salutis initium est, Ecclesia catholica profitetur, virtutem esse supernaturalem qua, Dei aspirante et adjuvante gratia, ab eo revelata vera esse credimus, non propter intrinsecam rerum veritatem naturali rationis lumine perspectam, sed propter auctoritatem ipsius Dei revelantis, qui nec falli nec fallere potest. Est enim fides, testante Apostolo, sperandarum substantia rerum, argumentum non apparentium.*

Ut nihilominus fidei nostrae obsequium rationi consentaneum esset, voluit Deus cum internis Spiritus Sancti auxiliis externa jungi revelationis suae argumenta, facta scilicet divina, atque imprimis miracula et prophetias, quae cum Dei omnipotentiam et infinitam scientiam luculenter commonstrent, divinae revelationis signa sunt certissima et omnium intelligentiae accommodata. Quare tum Moyses et Prophetae, tum ipse maxime Christus Dominus multa et manifestissima miracula et prophetias ediderunt; et de Apostolis legimus: Illi autem profecti praedicaverunt ubique, Domino cooperante, et sermonem confirmante, sequentibus signis.† Et rursum scriptum est: Habemus firmiorem propheticum sermonem, cui bene facitis attendentes quasi lucernae lucenti in caliginoso loco.‡

Licet autem fidei assensus nequaquam sit motus animi caecus: nemo tamen evangelicae praedicationi consentire potest, sicut oportet ad salutem consequendam, absque illuminatione et inspiratione Spiritus Sancti, qui dat omnibus suavitatem in consentiendo et credendo veritati.§ Quare fides ipsa in se, etiamsi per charitatem non operetur, donum Dei est, et actus ejus est opus ad salutem pertinens, quo homo liberam praestat ipsi Deo obedientiam, gratiae ejus, cui resistere posset, consentiendo et cooperando.

* Hebr. xi. 1.
† Marc. xvi. 20.
‡ 2 Petr. i. 19.
§ Syn. Araus. ii. can. 7.

Porro fide divina et catholica ea omnia credenda sunt, quae in verbo Dei scripto vel tradito continentur, et ab Ecclesia sive solemni judicio sive ordinario et universali magisterio tamquam divinitus revelata credenda proponuntur.

Quoniam vero sine fide impossibile est placere Deo, et ad filiorum ejus consortium pervenire; ideo nemini unquam sine illa contigit justificatio, nec ullus, nisi in ea perseveraverit usque in finem, vitam aeternam assequetur. Ut autem officio veram fidem amplectendi, in eaque constanter perseverandi satisfacere possemus, Deus per Filium suum unigenitum Ecclesiam instituit, suaeque institutionis manifestis notis instruxit, ut ea tamquam custos et magistra verbi revelati ab omnibus posset agnosci. Ad solam enim catholicam Ecclesiam ea pertinent omnia, quae ad evidentem fidei christianae credibilitatem tam multa et tam mira divinitus sunt disposita. Quin etiam Ecclesia per se ipsa, ob suam nempe admirabilem propagationem, eximiam sanctitatem et inexhaustam in omnibus bonis foecunditatem, ob catholicam unitatem, invictamque stabilitatem, magnum quoddam et perpetuum est motivum credibilitatis et divinae suae legationis testimonium irrefragabile.

Quo fit, ut ipsa veluti signum levatum in nationes,* et ad se invitet, qui nondum crediderunt, et filios suos certiores faciat, firmissimo niti fundamento fidem, quam profitentur. Cui quidem testimonio efficax subsidium accedit ex superna virtute. Etenim benignissimus Dominus et errantes gratia sua excitat atque adjuvat, ut ad agnitionem veritatis venire possint; et eos, quos de tenebris transtulit in admirabile lumen suum, in hoc eodem lumine ut perseverent, gratia sua confirmat, non deserens, nisi deseratur. Quocirca minime par est conditio eorum, qui per coeleste fidei donum catholicae veritati adhaeserunt, atque eorum, qui ducti opinionibus humanis, falsam religionem sectantur; illi enim, qui fidem sub Ecclesiae magisterio susceperunt, nullam unquam habere possunt justam causam mutandi, aut in dubium fidem eamdem revocandi. Quae cum ita sint, gratias agentes Deo Patri, qui dignos nos fecit in partem sortis sanctorum in lumine, tantam ne negligamus salutem, sed aspicientes in auctorem fidei et consummatorem Jesum, teneamus spei nostrae confessionem indeclinabilem.

CAPUT IV.

De Fide et Ratione.

Hoc quoque perpetuus Ecclesiae catholicae consensus tenuit et tenet, duplicem esse ordinem cognitionis, non solum principio, sed objecto etiam distinctum: principio quidem, quia in altero naturali ratione, in altero fide divina cognoscimus; objecto autem, quia praeter ea, ad quae naturalis ratio pertingere potest, credenda nobis proponuntur mysteria in Deo abs-

* Is. xi. 12.

condita, quae, nisi revelata divinitus, innotescere non possunt. Quocirca Apostolus, qui a gentibus Deum per ea, quae facta sunt, cognitum esse testatur, disserens tamen de gratia et veritate, quae per Jesum Christum facta est,* pronunciat: Loquimur Dei sapientiam in mysterio, quae abscondita est, quam praedestinavit Deus ante saecula in gloriam nostram, quam nemo principum hujus saeculi cognovit, nobis autem revelavit Deus per Spiritum suum: Spiritus enim omnia scrutatur, etiam profunda Dei.† Et ipse Unigenitus confitetur Patri, quia abscondit haec a sapientibus et prudentibus, et revelavit ea parvulis.‡

Ac ratio quidem, fide illustrata, cum sedulo, pie et sobrie quaerit, aliquam, Deo dante, mysteriorum intelligentiam eamque fructuosissimam assequitur, tum ex eorum, quae naturaliter cognoscit, analogia, tum e mysteriorum ipsorum nexu inter se et cum fine hominis ultimo; nunquam tamen idonea redditur ad ea perspicienda instar veritatum, quae proprium ipsius objectum constituunt. Divina enim mysteria suapte natura intellectum creatum sic excedunt, ut etiam revelatione tradita et fide suscepta, ipsius tamen fidei velamine contecta et quadam quasi caligine obvoluta maneant, quamdiu in hac mortali vita peregrinamur a Domino: per fidem enim ambulamus, et non per speciem.§

Verum etsi fides sit supra rationem, nulla tamen unquam inter fidem et rationem vera dissensio esse potest: cum idem Deus, qui mysteria revelat et fidem infundit, animo humano rationis lumen indiderit; Deus autem negare seipsum non possit, nec verum vero unquam contradicere. Inanis autem hujus contradictionis species inde potissimum oritur, quod vel fide dogmata ad mentem Ecclesiae intellecta et exposita non fuerint, vel opinionum commenta pro rationis effatis habeantur. Omnem igitur assertionem veritati illuminatae fidei contrariam omnino falsam esse definimus.‖ Porro Ecclesia, quae una cum apostolico munere docendi, mandatum accepit fidei depositum custodiendi, jus etiam et officium divinitus habet falsi nominis scientiam proscribendi, ne quis decipiatur per philosophiam, et inanem fallaciam.¶ Quapropter omnes christiani fideles hujusmodi opiniones, quae fidei doctrinae contrariae esse cognoscuntur, maxime si ab Ecclesia reprobatae fuerint, non solum prohibentur tanquam legitimas scientiae conclusiones defendere, sed pro erroribus potius, qui fallacem veritatis speciem prae se ferant, habere tenentur omnino.

Neque solum fides et ratio inter se dissidere nunquam possunt, sed opem quoque sibi mutuam ferunt, cum recta ratio fidei fundamenta demonstret, ejusque lumine illustrata rerum divinarum scientiam excolat; fides vero rationem ab erroribus liberet ac tueatur, eamque multiplici cognitione instruat. Quapropter tantum abest, ut Ecclesia humanarum artium et disciplinarum culturae obsistat, ut hanc multis modis juvet atque promoveat. Non enim commoda ab iis ad hominum vitam dimanantia

* Ioan. i. 17.
† 1 Cor. ii. 7–9.
‖ Conc. Lat. v. Bulla *Apostolici regiminis*.
‡ Matt. xi. 25.
§ 2 Cor. v. 7.
¶ Coloss. ii. 8.

aut ignorat aut despicit; fatetur imo, eas, quemadmodum a Deo, scientiarum Domino, profectae sunt, ita si rite pertractentur, ad Deum, juvante ejus gratia, perducere. Nec sane ipsa vetat, ne hujusmodi disciplinae in suo quaeque ambitu propriis utantur principiis et propria methodo; sed justam hanc libertatem agnoscens, id sedulo cavet, ne divinae doctrinae repugnando errores in se suscipiant, aut fines proprios transgressae, ea, quae sunt fidei, occupent et perturbent.

Neque enim fidei doctrina, quam Deus revelavit, velut philosophicum inventum proposita est humanis ingeniis perficienda, sed tanquam divinum depositum Christi Sponsae tradita, fideliter custodienda et infallibiliter declaranda. Hinc sacrorum quoque dogmatum is sensus perpetuo est retinendus, quem semel declaravit Sancta Mater Ecclesia, nec unquam ab eo sensu, altioris intelligentiae specie et nomine, recedendum. Crescat igitur et multum vehementerque proficiat, tam singulorum, quam omnium, tam unius hominis, quam totius Ecclesiae, aetatum ac saeculorum gradibus, intelligentia, scientia, sapientia: sed in suo dumtaxat genere, in eodem scilicet dogmate, eodem sensu, eademque sententia.*

* Vinc. Lir. *Common.* n. 28.

CANONES.

I.

De Deo rerum omnium Creatore.

1. Si quis unum verum Deum visibilium et invisibilium Creatorem et Dominum negaverit; anathema sit.

2. Si quis praeter materiam nihil esse affirmare non erubuerit; anathema sit.

3. Si quis dixerit, unam eandemque esse Dei et rerum omnium substantiam vel essentiam; anathema sit.

4. Si quis dixerit, res finitas, tum corporeas tum spirituales aut saltem spirituales, e divina substantia emanasse;

aut divinam essentiam sui manifestatione vel evolutione fieri omnia;

aut denique Deum esse ens universale seu indefinitum, quod sese determinando constituat rerum universitatem in genera, species et individua distinctam; anathema sit.

5. Si quis non confiteatur, mundum, resque omnes, quae in eo continentur, et spirituales et materiales, secundum totam suam substantiam a Deo ex nihilo esse productas;

aut Deum dixerit non voluntate ab omni necessitate libera, sed tam necessario creasse, quam necessario amat seipsum;

aut mundum ad Dei gloriam conditum esse negaverit; anathema sit.

II.

De Revelatione.

1. Si quis dixerit, Deum unum et verum, Creatorem et Dominum nostrum, per ea, quae facta sunt, naturali rationis humanae lumine certo cognosci non posse; anathema sit.

2. Si quis dixerit, fieri non posse, aut non expedire, ut per revelationem divinam homo de Deo, cultuque ei exhibendo edoceatur; anathema sit.

3. Si quis dixerit, hominem ad cognitionem et perfectionem, quae naturalem superet, divinitus evehi non posse, sed ex seipso ad omnis tandem veri et boni possessionem jugi profectu pertingere posse et debere; anathema sit.

4. Si quis sacrae Scripturae libros integros cum omnibus suis partibus, prout illos sancta Tridentina Synodus recensuit, pro sacris et canonicis non susceperit, aut eos divinitus inspiratos esse negaverit; anathema sit.

III

De Fide.

1. Si quis dixerit, rationem humanam ita independentem esse, ut fides ei a Deo imperari non possit; anathema sit.

2. Si quis dixerit, fidem divinam a naturali de Deo et rebus moralibus scientia non distingui, ac propterea ad fidem divinam non requiri, ut revelata veritas propter auctoritatem Dei revelantis credatur; anathema sit.

3. Si quis dixerit, revelationem divinam externis signis credibilem fieri non posse, ideoque sola interna cujusque experientia aut inspiratione privata homines ad fidem moveri debere; anathema sit.

4. Si quis dixerit, miracula nulla fieri posse, proindeque omnes de iis narrationes, etiam in sacra Scriptura contentas, inter fabulas vel mythos ablegandas esse; aut miracula certo cognosci nunquam posse, nec iis divinam religionis christianae originem rite probari; anathema sit.

5. Si quis dixerit, assensum fidei christianae non esse liberum, sed argumentis humanae rationis necessario produci; aut ad solam fidem vivam, quae per charitatem operatur, gratiam Dei necessariam esse; anathema sit.

6. Si quis dixerit, parem esse conditionem fidelium atque eorum, qui ad fidem unice veram nondum pervenerunt, ita ut catholici justam causam habere possint, fidem, quam sub Ecclesiae magisterio jam susceperunt, assensu suspenso in dubium vocandi, donec demonstrationem scientificam credibilitatis et veritatis fidei suae absolverint; anathema sit.

IV.

De Fide et Ratione.

1. Si quis dixerit, in revelatione divina nulla vera et proprie dicta mysteria contineri, sed universa fidei dogmata posse per rationem rite excultam e naturalibus principiis intelligi et demonstrari; anathema sit.

2. Si quis dixerit, disciplinas humanas ea cum libertate tractandas esse, ut earum assertiones, etsi doctrinae revelatae adversentur, tanquam verae retineri, neque ab Ecclesia proscribi possint; anathema sit.

3. Si quis dixerit, fieri posse, ut dogmatibus ab Ecclesia propositis, aliquando secundum progressum scientiae sensus tribuendus sit alius ab eo, quem intellexit et intelligit Ecclesia; anathema sit.

CONSTITUTIO DOGMATICA PRIMA DE ECCLESIA CHRISTI.

CAPUT I.

De Apostolici Primatus in beato Petro institutione.

Docemus itaque et declaramus, juxta Evangelii testimonia primatum jurisdictionis in universam Dei Ecclesiam immediate et directe beato Petro Apostolo promissum atque collatum a Christo Domino fuisse. Unum enim Simonem, cui jam pridem dixerat: Tu vocaberis Cephas,* postquam ille suam edidit confessionem inquiens: Tu es Christus, Filius Dei vivi, solemnibus his verbis allocutus est Dominus: Beatus es, Simon Bar-Jona, quia caro et sanguis non revelavit tibi, sed Pater meus, qui in coelis est: et ego dico tibi, quia tu es Petrus, et super hanc Petram aedificabo Ecclesiam meam, et portae inferi non praevalebunt adversus eam: et tibi dabo claves regni coelorum: et quodcumque ligaveris super terram, erit ligatum et in coelis: et quodcumque solveris super terram, erit solutum et in coelis.† Atque uni Simoni Petro contulit Jesus post suam resurrectionem summi pastoris et rectoris jurisdictionem in totum suum ovile dicens: Pasce agnos meos: Pasce oves meas.‡ Huic tam manifestae sacrarum Scripturarum doctrinae, ut ab Ecclesia catholica semper intellecta est, aperte opponuntur pravae eorum sententiae, qui, constitutam a Christo Domino in sua Ecclesia regiminis formam pervertentes, negant, solum Petrum prae caeteris Apostolis, sive seorsum singulis sive omnibus simul, vero proprioque jurisdictionis primatu fuisse a Christo instructum: aut qui affirmant, eundem primatum non immediate directeque ipsi beato Petro, sed Ecclesiae, et per hanc illi ut ipsius Ecclesiae ministro delatum fuisse.

Si quis igitur dixerit, beatum Petrum Apostolum non esse a Christo Domino constitutum Apostolorum omnium principem et totius Ecclesiae militantis visibile caput; vel eundem honoris tantum, non autem verae propriaeque jurisdictionis primatum ab eodem Domino nostro Jesu Christo directe et immediate accepisse; anathema sit.

CAPUT II.

De perpetuitate Primatus beati Petri in Romanis Pontificibus.

Quod autem in beato Apostolo Petro princeps pastorum et pastor magnus ovium Dominus Christus Jesus in perpetuam salutem ac perenne bonum Ecclesiae instituit, id eodem auctore in Ecclesia, quae fundata super

* Ioan. i. 42. † Matt. xvi. 16–19. ‡ Ioan. xxi. 15–17.

petram ad finem saeculorum usque firma stabit, jugiter durare necesse est. Nulli sane dubium, imo saeculis omnibus notum est, quod sanctus beatissimusque Petrus, Apostolorum princeps et caput fideique columna, et Ecclesiae catholicae fundamentum, a Domino nostro Jesu Christo, Salvatore humani generis ac Redemptore, claves regni accepit: qui ad hoc usque tempus et semper in suis successoribus, episcopis sanctae Romanae Sedis, ab ipso fundatae, ejusque consecratae sanguine, vivit et praesidet et judicium exercet.* Unde quicumque in hac Cathedra Petro succedit, is secundum Christi ipsius institutionem primatum Petri in universam Ecclesiam, obtinet. Manet ergo dispositio veritatis, et beatus Petrus, in accepta fortitudine petrae perseverans, suscepta Ecclesiae gubernacula non reliquit.† Hac de causa ad Romanam Ecclesiam propter potentiorem principalitatem necesse semper fuit omnem convenire Ecclesiam, hoc est, eos, qui sunt undique fideles, ut in ea Sede, e qua venerandae communionis jura in omnes dimanant, tamquam membra in capite consociata, in unam corporis compagem coalescerent.‡

Si quis ergo dixerit, non esse ex ipsius Christi Domini institutione, seu jure divino, ut beatus Petrus in primatu super universam Ecclesiam habeat perpetuos successores; aut Romanum Pontificem non esse beati Petri in eodem primatu successorem; anathema sit.

CAPUT III

De vi et ratione Primatus Romani Pontificis.

Quapropter apertis innixi sacrarum litterarum testimoniis, et inhaerentes tum Praedecessorum Nostrorum, Romanorum Pontificum, tum Conciliorum generalium disertis perspicuisque decretis, innovamus oecumenici Concilii Florentini definitionem, qua credendum ab omnibus Christi fidelibus est, sanctam Apostolicam Sedem, et Romanum Pontificem in universum orbem tenere primatum, et ipsum Pontificem Romanum successorem esse beati Petri, principis Apostolorum, et verum Christi Vicarium, totiusque Ecclesiae caput, et omnium Christianorum patrem ac doctorem existere; et ipsi in beato Petro pascendi, regendi ac gubernandi universalem Ecclesiam a Domino nostro Jesu Christo plenam potestatem traditam esse; quemadmodum etiam in gestis oecumenicorum Conciliorum et sacris canonibus continetur.

Docemus proinde et declaramus, Ecclesiam Romanam, disponente Domino, super omnes alias ordinariae potestatis obtinere principatum, et hanc Romani Pontificis jurisdictionis potestatem, quae vere episcopalis est, immediatam esse: erga quam cujuscumque ritus et dignitatis pastores

* *Cf.* Ephesini Conc. Act. III.

† S. Leo M. Serm. III. (al. II.) cap. 3.

‡ S. Iren. Adv. haer. l. III. c. 3. et Conc. Aquil. a. 381. inter epp. S. Ambros. ep. XI.

atque fideles, tam seorsum singuli quam simul omnes, officio hierarchicae subordinationis veraeque obedientiae obstringuntur, non solum in rebus, quae ad fidem et mores, sed etiam in iis, quae ad disciplinam et regimen Ecclesiae per totum orbem diffusae pertinent; ita ut, custodita cum Romano Pontifice tam communionis, quam ejusdem fidei professionis unitate, Ecclesiae Christi sit unus grex sub uno summo pastore. Haec est catholicae veritatis doctrina, a qua deviare salva fide atque salute nemo potest.

Tantum autem abest, ut haec Summi Pontificis potestas officiat ordinariae ac immediatae illi episcopalis jurisdictionis potestati, qua Episcopi, qui positi a Spiritu Sancto in Apostolorum locum successerunt, tamquam veri pastores assignatos sibi greges, singuli singulos, pascunt et regunt, ut eadem a supremo et universali Pastore asseratur, roboretur ac vindicetur, secundum illud sancti Gregorii Magni: Meus honor est honor universalis Ecclesiae. Meus honor est fratrum meorum solidus vigor. Tum ego vere honoratus sum, cum singulis quibusque honor debitus non negatur.*

Porro ex suprema illa Romani Pontificis potestate gubernandi universam Ecclesiam jus eidem esse consequitur, in hujus sui muneris exercitio libere communicandi cum pastoribus et gregibus totius Ecclesiae, ut iidem ab ipso in via salutis doceri ac regi possint. Quare damnamus ac reprobamus illorum sententias, qui hanc supremi capitis cum pastoribus et gregibus communicationem licite impediri posse dicunt, aut eandem reddunt saeculari potestati obnoxiam, ita ut contendant, quae ab Apostolica Sede vel ejus auctoritate ad regimen Ecclesiae constituuntur, vim ac valorem non habere, nisi potestatis saecularis placito confirmentur.

Et quoniam divino Apostolici primatus jure Romanus Pontifex universae Ecclesiae praeest, docemus etiam et declaramus, eum esse judicem supremum fidelium,† et in omnibus causis ad examen ecclesiasticum spectantibus ad ipsius posse judicium recurri;‡ Sedis vero Apostolicae, cujus auctoritate major non est, judicium a nemine fore retractandum, neque cuiquam de ejus licere judicare judicio.§ Quare a recto veritatis tramite aberrant, qui affirmant, licere ab judiciis Romanorum Pontificum ad oecumenicum Concilium tamquam ad auctoritatem Romano Pontifice superiorem appellare.

Si quis itaque dixerit, Romanum Pontificem habere tantummodo officium inspectionis vel directionis, non autem plenam et supremam potestatem jurisdictionis in universam Ecclesiam, non solum in rebus, quae ad fidem et mores, sed etiam in iis, quae ad disciplinam et regimen Ecclesiae per totum orbem diffusae pertinent; aut eum habere tantum potiores partes,

* Ep. ad Eulog. Alexandrin. l. VIII. ep. XXX.
† Pii P. VI. Breve, *Super soliditate* d. 28. Nov. 1786.
‡ Concil. Oecum. Lugdun. II.
§ Ep. Nicolai I. ad Michaelem Imperatorem.

non vero totam plenitudinem hujus supremae potestatis; aut hanc ejus potestatem non esse ordinariam et immediatam sive in omnes ac singulas ecclesias, sive in omnes et singulos pastores et fideles; anathema sit.

CAPUT IV.

De Romani Pontificis infallibili magisterio.

Ipso autem Apostolico primatu, quem Romanus Pontifex, tamquam Petri principis Apostolorum successor, in universam Ecclesiam obtinet, supremam quoque magisterii potestatem comprehendi, haec Sancta Sedes semper tenuit, perpetuus Ecclesiae usus comprobat, ipsaque oecumenica Concilia, ea imprimis, in quibus Oriens cum Occidente in fidei charitatisque unionem conveniebat, declaraverunt. Patres enim Concilii Constantinopolitani quarti, majorum vestigiis inhaerentes, hanc solemnem ediderunt professionem: Prima salus est, rectae fidei regulam custodire. Et quia non potest Domini nostri Jesu Christi praetermitti sententia dicentis: Tu es Petrus, et super hanc petram aedificabo Ecclesiam meam, haec, quae dicta sunt, rerum probantur effectibus, quia in Sede Apostolica immaculata est semper catholica reservata religio, et sancta celebrata doctrina. Ab hujus ergo fide et doctrina separari minime cupientes, speramus, ut in una communione, quam Sedes Apostolica praedicat, esse mereamur, in qua est integra et vera Christianae religionis soliditas.‡ Approbante vero Lugdunensi Concilio secundo, Graeci professi sunt: Sanctam Romanam Ecclesiam summum et plenum primatum et principatum super universam Ecclesiam catholicam obtinere, quem se ab ipso Domino in beato Petro, Apostolorum principe sive vertice, cujus Romanus Pontifex est successor, cum potestatis plenitudine recepisse veraciter et humiliter recognoscit; et sicut prae caeteris tenetur fidei veritatem defendere, sic et, si quae de fide subortae fuerint quaestiones, suo debent judicio definiri. Florentinum denique Concilium definivit: Pontificem Romanum, verum Christi Vicarium, totiusque Ecclesiae caput et omnium Christianorum patrem ac doctorem existere; et ipsi in beato Petro pascendi, regendi ac gubernandi universalem Ecclesiam a Domino nostro Jesu Christo plenam potestatem traditam esse.

Huic pastorali muneri ut satisfacerent, Praedecessores Nostri indefessam semper operam dederunt, ut salutaris Christi doctrina apud omnes terrae populos propagaretur, parique cura vigilarunt, ut, ubi recepta esset, sincera et pura conservaretur. Quocirca totius orbis Antistites, nunc singuli, nunc in Synodis congregati, longam ecclesiarum consuetudinem et antiquae regulae formam sequentes, ea praesertim pericula, quae in negotiis fidei emergebant, ad hanc Sedem Apostolicam retulerunt, ut ibi potissimum resarcirentur

‡ Ex formula S. Hormisdae Papae, prout ab Hadriano II. Patribus Concili Oecumenici VII., Constantinopolitani IV. proposita et ab iisdem subscripta est.

damna fidei, ubi fides non potest sentire defectum.† Romani autem Pontifices, prout temporum et rerum conditio suadebat, nunc convocatis oecumenicis Conciliis aut explorata Ecclesiae per orbem dispersae sententia, nunc per Synodos particulares, nunc aliis, quae divina suppeditabat providentia, adhibitis auxiliis, ea tenenda definiverunt, quae sacris Scripturis et apostolicis Traditionibus consentanea, Deo adjutore, cognoverant. Neque enim Petri successoribus Spiritus Sanctus promissus est, ut eo revelante novam doctrinam patefacerent, sed ut, eo assistente, traditam per Apostolos revelationem seu fidei depositum sancte custodirent et fideliter exponerent. Quorum quidem apostolicam doctrinam omnes venerabiles Patres amplexi et sancti Doctores orthodoxi venerati atque secuti sunt; plenissime scientes, hanc sancti Petri Sedem ab omni semper errore illibatam permanere, secundum Domini Salvatoris nostri divinam pollicitationem discipulorum suorum principi factam: Ego rogavi pro te, ut non deficiat fides tua, et tu aliquando conversus confirma fratres tuos.

Hoc igitur veritatis et fidei nunquam deficientis charisma Petro ejusque in hac Cathedra successoribus divinitus collatum est, ut excelso suo munere in omnium salutem fungerentur, ut universus Christi grex per eos ab erroris venenosa esca aversus, coelestis doctrinae pabulo nutriretur, ut, sublata schismatis occasione, Ecclesia tota una conservaretur, atque suo fundamento innixa, firma adversus inferi portas consisteret.

At vero cum hac ipsa aetate, qua salutifera Apostolici muneris efficacia vel maxime requiritur, non pauci inveniantur, qui illius auctoritati obtrectant; necessarium omnino esse censemus, praerogativam, quam unigenitus Dei Filius cum summo pastorali officio conjungere dignatus est, solemniter asserere.

Itaque Nos traditioni a fidei Christianae exordio perceptae fideliter inhaerendo, ad Dei Salvatoris nostri gloriam, religionis Catholicae exaltationem et Christianorum populorum salutem, sacro approbante Concilio, docemus et divinitus revelatum dogma esse definimus: Romanum Pontificem, cum ex Cathedra loquitur, id est, cum omnium Christianorum Pastoris et Doctoris munere fungens pro suprema sua Apostolica auctoritate doctrinam de fide vel moribus ab universa Ecclesia tenendam definit, per assistentiam divinam, ipsi in beato Petro promissam, ea infallibilitate pollere, qua divinus Redemptor Ecclesiam suam in definienda doctrina de fide vel moribus instructam esse voluit; ideoque ejusmodi Romani Pontificis definitiones ex sese, non autem ex consensu Ecclesiae, irreformabiles esse.

Si quis autem huic Nostrae definitioni contradicere, quod Deus avertat, praesumpserit; anathema sit.

† *Cf.* S. Bern. Epist. CXC.

SUSPENSIO CONCILII.

Postquam Dei munere Oecumenici Vaticani Concilii celebrationem inire anno proxime superiori Nobis datum est, vidimus, sapientia, virtute ac sollicitudine Patrum, qui ex omnibus orbis terrarum partibus frequentissimi convenerant, maxime adnitente, ita res gravissimi hujus et sanctissimi operis procedere, ut spes certa Nobis affulgeret, eos fructus, quos vehementer optabamus, in religionis bonum et Ecclesiae Dei humanaeque societatis utilitatem ex illo fore profecturos. Et sane, jam quatuor publicis ac solemnibus sessionibus habitis, salutares atque opportunae in causa fidei Constitutiones a Nobis, eodem sacro approbante Concilio, editae ac promulgatae fuerunt, aliaque tum causam fidei, tum ecclesiasticae disciplinae spectantia ad examen a Patribus revocata, quae suprema docentis Ecclesiae auctoritate brevi sanciri ac promulgari possent. Confidebamus, istiusmodi labores, communi fraternitatis studio ac zelo, suos progressus habere, et ad optatum exitum facili prosperoque cursu perduci posse; — sed sacrilega repente invasio hujus almae Urbis, Sedis Nostrae, et reliquarum temporalis Nostrae ditionis regionum, qua, contra omne fas, civilis Nostri et Apostolicae Sedis principatus inconcussa jura, incredibili perfidia et audacia, violata sunt, in eam Nos rerum conditionem conjecit, ut sub hostili dominatione et potestate, Deo sic permittente, ob imperscrutabilia judicia sua, penitus constituti simus. In hac luctuosa rerum conditione, cum nos a libero expeditoque usu supremae auctoritatis Nobis divinitus collatae multis modis impediamur, cumque probe intelligamus, minime ipsis Vaticani Concilii Patribus in hac alma Urbe, praedicto rerum statu manente, necessariam libertatem, securitatem, tranquillitatem suppetere et constare posse ad res Ecclesiae Nobiscum rite pertractandas, cumque praeterea necessitates fidelium, in tantis iisque notissimis Europae calamitatibus et motibus, tot pastores a suis ecclesiis abesse haud patiantur;— idcirco Nos, eo res adductas magno cum animi Nostri moerore perspicientes, ut Vaticanum Concilium tali in tempore cursum suum omnino tenere non possit; praevia matura deliberatione, motu proprio ejusdem Vaticani Oecumenici Concilii celebrationem usque ad aliud opportunius et commodius tempus per hanc sanctam Sedem declarandum Apostolica auctoritate, tenore praesentium, suspendimus, et suspensam esse nunciamus, Deum adprecantes, auctorem et vindicem Ecclesiae Suae, ut, submotis tandem impedimentis omnibus Sponsae Suae fidelissimae ocius restituat libertatem et pacem.

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